

# THE RESERVE AT SWEETWATER ESTUARY

## APPLICATION FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AND TEXT AMENDMENTS Taylor County, Florida

### Prepared For:

***Secret Promise, Ltd.***  
1 Beach Drive SE  
Suite 302 E  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

### Prepared By:

***Wilson Miller***  
1441 Maclay Commerce Drive  
Suite 101  
Tallahassee, Florida 32312

February 2010

**In Conjunction With:**



**BIRKITT**  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
SERVICES, INC.

**Birkitt Environmental Services, Inc.  
550 N. Reo Street, Suite 105  
Tampa, FL 33609**



**Lewis, Longman, and Walker, P.A.  
245 Riverside Avenue Suite 150  
Jacksonville, FL 32202**

**Oscar M. Howard, III  
Attorney at Law, P.A.  
315 West Green Street, Suite 100  
Post Office Box 22  
Perry, Florida 32348**



**WadeTrim  
8745 Henderson Road, Suite 220  
Tampa, Florida 33634**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b>	
<b>II.</b>	<b>OFFICIAL APPLICATION FORM FOR AMENDMENT OF THE TAYLOR COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN</b>	
<b>III.</b>	<b>TYPE OF REQUEST</b>	
	A. Text Amendment	
	B. Map Amendment	
<b>IV.</b>	<b>JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST</b>	
	A. Land Use Need	
	B. Economic Benefits	
	C. Environmental Considerations	
<b>V.</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY/ADJACENT USES</b>	
<b>VI.</b>	<b>NATURAL RESOURCES/FEATURES OF SUBJECT PROPERTY</b>	
	A. Site Description	
	B. Land Use	
	C. Soils	
	D. Wetlands	
	E. Listed Wildlife Species	
	F. Historic and Cultural Resources	
	G. Natural Resources	
<b>VII.</b>	<b>FACILITIES AND SERVICES</b>	
	A. Potable Water	
	B. Sanitary Sewer	
	C. Solid Waste	
	D. Stormwater	
	E. Transportation	
	F. Hurricane Evacuation	
	G. Recreation and Open Space	
	H. Schools	
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>URBAN SPRAWL ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>IX.</b>	<b>CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>X.</b>	<b>FIGURES</b>	
	Location Map	Figure 1
	Existing Future Land Use Map	Figure 2
	Proposed Future Land Use Map	Figure 3
	Proposed Future Land Use Sub-areas Map	Figure 4
	Existing Habitat (FLUCCS)	Figure 5
	Soil Classifications	Figure 6
	Eagle Nest Locations	Figure 7
	Wetlands	Figure 8

Cultural Resources General Location  
Passive Recreation

Figure 9  
Figure 10

**XI. APPENDICES**

**WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**APPENDIX A**

**CULTURAL RESOURCES CORRESPONDENCE**

**APPENDIX B**

**PUBLIC FACILITIES IMPACT ANALYSIS**

**APPENDIX C**

**WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SITE ANALYSIS**

**APPENDIX D**

**TRANSPORTATION IMPACT ANALYSIS**

**APPENDIX E**

**HURRICANE EVACUATION IMPACT ANALYSIS**

**APPENDIX F**

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

**APPENDIX G**

**AUDUBON INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE**

**APPENDIX H**

### Acronym List

AWT	Advanced Wastewater Treatment
CAMA	Coastal Aquatic Management Areas
CHHA	Coastal High Hazard Area
DCA	Department of Community Affairs
EAR	Evaluation and Appraisal Report
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAC	Florida Administrative Code
FDOT	Florida Department of Transportation
FEDP	Florida Department of Environmental Protection
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FISH	Florida Inventory of School Houses
FLUCCS	Florida Land Use Cover and Forms Classification System
FMSF	Florida Master Site Files
FNAI	Florida Natural Areas Inventory
FWC	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
gpd	Gallons per Day
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LID	Low Impact Development
LOS	Level of Service
MGD	Million Gallons per Day
NGVD	National Geodetic Vertical Datum
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NRMP	Natural Resource Management Plan

OFW	Outstanding Florida Waters
RACEC	Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SRWMD	Suwannee River Water Management District
TCW&SD	Taylor Coastal Water and Sewer District
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USDA-NRCS	United States Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Natural Resources Conservation Service
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

An amendment to the text of the Future Land Use Element and Capital Improvements Element of the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan is being submitted within this package, along with an amendment to the Future Land Use Map. The purpose of the first proposed text amendment is to introduce a new Future Land Use Map category within the Future Land Use Element. The proposed Sweetwater Resort Community land use category allows a mix of resort uses to support ecotourism and public activities, including meeting space and other resources to educate the public and visitors about the heritage of Taylor County and its related natural resources, while focusing on the preservation of natural open spaces, sensitive lands, and area character. The proposed land use category includes specific development standards such as a development cap, centralized potable water and sanitary sewer service, stormwater management that meets water quality standards required for Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW), and wetland protection standards. The second text amendment proposes to amend the five-year schedule of capital improvements to reflect the proposed development agreement between the Applicant and the Taylor County Board of County Commissioners.

In addition, this package contains a proposed amendment to the Future Land Use Map of the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan in order to utilize and implement the proposed Sweetwater Resort Community land use category. Please refer to Figure 3 and Figure 4 for the *Proposed Future Land Use Map* and *Proposed Future Land Use Sub-areas Map*, respectively. The proposed land use map amendment establishes a suitable location in the coastal region of unincorporated Taylor County for a recreational resort development that would be well-served by the existing roadway network. The proposed amendment area is located within the Steinhatchee River Basin and is hydrologically connected to the Gulf of Mexico. Comprising approximately 1,291 acres, the proposed amendment site includes sufficient upland acreage to allow for a mix of resort uses including permanent and seasonal resort residential dwelling units, commercial, a hotel/conference center and a golf course. Development will be clustered in upland areas to provide large areas of open space, protect environmentally sensitive areas, increase connectivity, reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and promote ecotourism.

Taylor County is designated as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC). The proposed Sweetwater Resort Community land use category furthers the intent of the RACEC designation by providing a mechanism to assist the County in promoting ecotourism as a significant component of its rural economy. The proposed text amendment will allow a recreational resort area while ensuring that development and related recreational activities are conducted in an environmentally sensitive manner that is compatible with the rural coastal character of Taylor County. Furthermore, the proposed Future Land Use Map amendment is in a unique position to promote ecotourism as a significant component of the Taylor County economy. Approximately 88 percent of the Gulf-fronting property in Taylor County is owned or managed by the State of Florida and other public entities. The majority of this coastline is designated in the Comprehensive Plan and by the State for conservation. The Applicant is among a few private landowners to own a portion of the remaining 12 percent of the land along the coastline. As part of the limited area available for private development along the coastline in Taylor County, the proposed amendment site represents a substantial existing environmental/economic investment that will be supportive of regional economics and quality of life. The Sweetwater Resort Community land use category

provides a catalyst to establish ecotourism in Taylor County and diversify the economic base. The proposed Future Land Use category and map amendment targets a predominantly seasonal, resort-oriented niche market with a combination of uses that promotes ecotourism through proximity and access to the Gulf Coast.

Finally, the proposed Sweetwater Resort Community land use category, along with the accompanying Future Land Use Map amendment, furthers the intent of Rule 9J-5.006(5)(l), F.A.C., which states the Department of Community Affairs encourages creative land use planning techniques such as clustering and open space provisions “that allow the conversion of rural and agricultural lands to other uses while protecting environmentally sensitive areas, maintaining the economic viability of agricultural and other predominantly rural land uses, and providing for the cost-efficient delivery of public facilities and services.” Rule 9J-5.006(5)(l), F.A.C., also states that these innovative and flexible planning and development strategies “will be recognized as methods of discouraging urban sprawl and will be determined consistent with the provisions of the state comprehensive plan, regional policy plans, Chapter 163, Part II, Florida Statutes, and this chapter regarding discouraging the proliferation of urban sprawl.”

**II. OFFICIAL APPLICATION FORM FOR AMENDMENT OF THE TAYLOR COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

MALCOLM PAGE  
District 1

MARK WIGGINS  
District 2

LONNIE HOUCK  
District 3

RUDOLPH PARKER  
District 4

PATRICIA PATTERSON  
District 5



**TAYLOR COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**APPLICATION FOR AMENDMENT  
OF THE TAYLOR COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Fee: \$ 5,000 Amendment #: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Applicant(s): Secret Promise, Ltd.

Address: 1 Beach Drive SE, Suite 302 E, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Telephone: 727-580-7222

Name of Applicant's Agent (if applicable): Tom Beck, AICP

Address: 1441 Maclay Commerce Blvd., Suite 101, Tallahassee, FL 32312

Telephone: (850) 878-5001

Please complete the following for proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Map. For amendments to the text of the Comprehensive Plan, which do not require a Future Land Use Plan Map amendment, please omit responses to Part I and complete only Part II of this application.

**PART I**

Legal Description: **Refer to Appendix G.**

Total Acreage of land to be considered under amendment: 1,291 +/-

Property Street Address: N/A

Applicants Interest in the Subject Property: Secret Promise, Ltd. is the owner of fee simple title to the Project Site.

Property Owners Name: Secret Promise, Ltd.

Property Owners Address: 1 Beach Drive SE, Suite 302E, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Existing Land Use Activities: **The proposed amendment site consists of unimproved land. Several access roads exist within the property boundaries. These roads typically transect wetland habitat areas and have been utilized for silviculture and other commercial activities (e.g., access roads for hunt club members), in the past.**

For amendments involving areas designated Agricultural/Rural Residential, Mixed Use Rural Residential, and Mixed Use – Urban Development on the Future Land Use Map, provide inventory of all wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, and documentation that the proposed use will not negatively impact environmentally sensitive lands.

**Refer to Section VI. (D).**

Future Land Use Present: Agricultural/Rural Residential and Mixed Use – Urban  
Plan Map Development  
Category:

Requested: Sweetwater Resort Community

## PART II

**Please provide on separate pages to be attached and made a part herewith the following:**

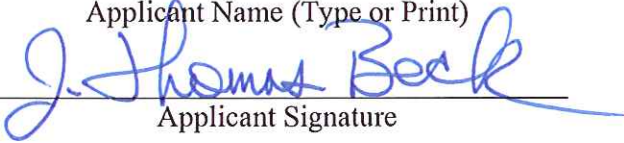
1. The Text of the Proposed Amendment.  
**Refer to Section III. (A).**
2. Statement Describing any Changed Conditions That Would Justify an Amendment.  
**Refer to Section IV.**
3. Statement Describing Why There is a Need for the Proposed Amendment.  
**Refer to Section IV.**
4. Statement Describing Whether and How the Proposed Amendment is Consistent With the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan.  
**Refer to Section IX.**
5. Statement Outlining the Extent to Which the Proposed Amendment:
  - a. Is Compatible With Existing Land Uses; **Refer to Section V. and Section VIII.**
  - b. Affects The Capacities of Public Facilities and Services; **Refer to Section VII.**
  - c. Affects the Natural Environment; **Refer to Section VI.**
  - d. Will Result in an Orderly and Logical Development Pattern. **Refer to Section VIII.**

I hereby certify that all of the above statements and statements contained in any papers or plans submitted herewith are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

If title holder(s) are represented by an agent, a letter of designation from the title holder(s) addressed to the County Planning Director must be attached.

**Tom Beck, AICP**

Applicant Name (Type or Print)



Applicant Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



February 18, 2010

Mr. William D. Griner, Director  
Taylor County Building/Planning Department  
201 East Green Street  
Perry, Florida 32347

Re: Letter of Designation

Dear Mr. Griner:

Secret Promise, Ltd. is submitting an application for several large-scale amendments to the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this letter is to inform the Taylor County Planning Department that Secret Promise, Ltd. has designated Tom Beck, AICP, as its representative agent. Mr. Beck can be contacted at (850) 878-5001.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Crayton Pruitt Sr.".

Dr. J. Crayton Pruitt, Sr.  
Secret Promise, Ltd.



### III. TYPE OF REQUEST

#### A. Text Amendments

**Text Amendment #1:** The first proposed text amendment consists of a new Future Land Use Map category within the Future Land Use Element. The Sweetwater Resort Community future land use category applies to approximately 1,291 acres of land, situated in unincorporated Taylor County between Dekle Beach Road and County Road 361. The location of the property is generally depicted on Figure 1 *Location Map*. The proposed text amendment allows a mixed-use resort community that focuses on the preservation of natural open spaces and sensitive lands, promotes connectivity and reduces vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and showcases the character of the area. The proposed land use category includes provisions that will maximize the preservation of conservation areas, encourage creative design by clustering development onto uplands surrounded by natural open spaces, and ensure that development and related recreational activities are conducted in an environmentally sensitive manner that is compatible with the rural character of Taylor County. These provisions include specific development standards such as a development cap, limited permitted uses, interconnectivity, centralized potable water and sanitary sewer service, stormwater management that meets water quality standards required for OFW and stringent wetland protection standards.

The following text amendment will be incorporated into the Future Land Use Element of the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan:

#### Sweetwater Resort Community

- 1) Purpose and Intent. The Sweetwater Resort Community future land use category shall apply to approximately 1,291 acres of land, situated along Dekle Beach Road and County Road 361, as depicted on the Taylor County Future Land Use Map. The land use category provides for a compact, integrated mixed-use resort community that is designed with connectivity among the uses in order to promote a pedestrian/biking/golf cart transportation network. Proposed development is primarily clustered in upland areas to create large tracts of open space, protect environmentally sensitive areas, and promote ecotourism. The community shall be served by central water and sewer. The Sweetwater Resort Community shall provide a positive fiscal impact for Taylor County which is designated as a Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern.
- 2) Sub-area Descriptions. Within the Sweetwater Resort Community land use category, three general sub-areas as shown on Figure 4 will apply to the land as follows:
  - a) Development Area. The development area will consist of nodes of development (A, B, C, D, E, and F), including a mixed-use town center (E and F), with access to County Road 361 where residential, commercial, hotel/conference center, recreation, civic/public uses, roads, trails, boardwalks, kayak launching facility, and supporting infrastructure will occur. This area occupies approximately 127 acres.

- b) Golf Course Area. The golf course area will be limited to an 18-hole golf course, 11,000-12,000 square foot clubhouse, 5,500-6,500 square foot maintenance facility, and supporting infrastructure. This area occupies approximately 147 acres.
  - c) Conservation Area. The conservation area is the remainder of the land that is not developed and shall be designated conservation with the following allowable uses: fishing, passive recreation including boardwalks and park areas, silvicultural uses subject to Best Management Practices, water resources utilization, and preservation/conservation. No silvicultural uses shall be allowed in salt marsh wetlands (see Figure 5). This area occupies approximately 1,017 acres.
- 3) Development Standards. The following development standards shall apply to development within the Sweetwater Resort Community land use category and shall be implemented in a manner consistent with the purpose and guidelines of this policy.
- a) Permitted Uses. Permitted uses shall be limited to the following: residential, hotel/conference center, commercial uses, golf course, civic/public uses, roads, utilities and other infrastructure services, silvicultural uses, recreation and conservation/preservation uses.
  - b) Density/Intensity. Development within the Sweetwater Resort Community land use category shall be limited to:
    - 1. 624 residential units, 400 resort hotel rooms, 150,000 square feet of commercial space, civic/public uses, roads, pedestrian/biking/cart trails, passive recreation, boardwalks, kayak launching facility and supporting infrastructure. Development Nodes A, B, and C as shown on Figure 4, will be limited to a total of 150 residential units and associated recreation uses with a neighborhood commercial center located in Node B to serve the residential development. A neighborhood commercial center will also be located in node D to serve the hotel and residential development.
    - 2. A maximum of 190 residential units and 150 hotel rooms in the coastal high hazard area. Buildings shall be limited to a maximum of four habitable stories.
    - 3. An 18-hole golf course, an approximately 11,000 to 12,000 square foot clubhouse, a 5,500 to 6,500 square foot maintenance facility, and supporting infrastructure.
- 4) Infrastructure. Central infrastructure shall be planned and designed for potable water, sanitary sewer, roadways, and drainage. The County shall not be responsible for funding the provision of transportation and infrastructure required to support proposed development within the Sweetwater Resort Community. These systems will ultimately be maintained by the developer, homeowners or condominium or property owners association, or a Community Development District.

- a) Potable Water. All potable water needs within the proposed development shall be serviced by a central potable water system. The developer will construct or cause to be constructed all necessary water service infrastructure to service the development.
  - b) Sanitary Sewer. All sanitary sewer needs within the proposed development shall be serviced by a central sanitary sewer system. The developer will provide wastewater treatment and disposal that is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and which shall include a central sanitary sewer system to service the development. It is proposed that the wastewater treatment facility will use the Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) process which produces an effluent of higher quality than achieved by traditional secondary treatment processes. However, if a hydrogeologic study performed during the permitting phase for a new wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), determines that a secondary treatment level similar to the existing WWTP will not impact water quality in the Aquatic Preserve, then it may be constructed in lieu of an AWT plant.
  - c) Drainage. All stormwater runoff and drainage system improvements within the property will be designed and constructed in accordance with Chapter 40B-4 F.A.C and shall manage and treat stormwater runoff to existing County standards; be constructed or caused to be constructed by the developer; and maintained by the developer, a home/condominium owners association, or a Community Development District. Stormwater runoff will be treated by proposed wet detention stormwater management systems and will meet water quality standards required by the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) for OFW. In addition, the golf course will obtain and maintain the designation at the Silver Level in the Audubon International Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Program in order to achieve heightened water quality and conservation benefits. The Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program application for The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary has been approved for review at the Bronze Level; however, application for Silver Level will be submitted. Please refer to Appendix H for a copy of correspondence with Audubon International.
- 5) Wetland Protection. Development shall be clustered to avoid encroachments into wetlands. Less than three percent of the total wetlands onsite will be directly impacted. Development shall comply with state permitting requirements, including required mitigation and wetland buffers, in accordance with Chapter 62, F.A.C. Mitigation to offset proposed wetlands impacts will be determined using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.

**Text Amendment #2:** The purpose of the second proposed text amendment is to revise Table VIII-1: Five Year Schedule of Capital Improvements in the Capital Improvements Element to reflect the construction of the necessary potable water wells and distribution system, and WWTP and force main to serve the development with funding to be provided by the developer.

The WWTP is proposed to be constructed adjacent to the existing Taylor Coastal Water and Sewer District (TCW&SD) WWTP which is located in the southwest quadrant of the

intersection of Sand Hill Road and Blue Creek Road. The proposed plant will provide AWT which produces an effluent of higher quality than achieved by traditional secondary treatment processes. However, if a hydrogeologic study performed during the permitting phase for a new WWTP, determines that a secondary treatment level similar to the existing WWTP will not impact water quality in the Aquatic Preserve, then it may be constructed in lieu of an AWT plant. In addition to the WWTP, the developer will construct a force main from the development site to the proposed treatment plant.

Due to the existing lack of capacity in the potable water system operated by TCW&SD, it is further proposed, that the developer will fund the construction of well(s) to be located at the TCW&SD existing facility and the distribution system necessary to service the development.

The capital improvements will be funded by the developer and are proposed to appear in the Five Year Schedule of Capital Improvements during Fiscal Year 2012-2013.

The following revisions will be incorporated into the Capital Improvement Element of the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan:

**FIVE YEAR SCHEDULE OF IMPROVEMENTS**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION	SCHEDULE	PROJECTED COST	GENERAL LOCATION	REVENUE SOURCE	CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER ELEMENTS
<u>None</u>					

**TABLE VIII-1  
SCHEDULE OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS  
2010-2015**

<u>Project</u>	<u>Fiscal Year</u> 2010-2011	<u>Fiscal Year</u> 2011-2012	<u>Fiscal Year</u> 2012-2013	<u>Fiscal Year</u> 2013-2014	<u>Fiscal Year</u> 2014-2015
<b>Potable Water Improvements</b>					
Construct Potable Water Wells			\$506,250		
Construct Well Distribution System			\$750,000		
<b>Sanitary Sewer Improvements</b>					
Construct WWTP			\$3,696,250		
Construct Force Main			\$2,784,000		
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$7,736,500</b>		

**B. Map Amendment**

The total acreage for the site that is the subject of this proposed amendment consists of approximately 1,291 acres and is generally depicted on Figure 1 *Location Map*. The proposed Future Land Use Map amendment will redesignate approximately 1,291 acres of “Agricultural/Rural Residential” and “Mixed Use – Urban Development” to “Sweetwater Resort Community”. Figure 2 *Existing Future Land Use Map* depicts the existing future land use and Figures 3 and 4 *Proposed Future Land Use Map* and *Proposed Future Land Use Sub-areas Map* depict the proposed land use. Table 1 identifies the total acreage and the existing and proposed land uses for the proposed amendment area.

**TABLE 1  
EXISTING AND PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS  
BY ACRES FOR THE SUBJECT SITE**

Future Land Use Categories within the Proposed Amendment Area	Acres		
	Existing	Proposed	Change
“Agricultural/Rural Residential”	1,246	0	1,246 -
“Mixed Use – Urban Development”	45	0	45 -
“Sweetwater Resort Community”	0	1,291	1,291 +
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,291</b>	<b>1,291</b>	<b>0</b>

Source: WilsonMiller, Inc. (January 2010)

#### IV. JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST

The Comprehensive Plan Amendment package includes a text amendment that proposes a new land use category called Sweetwater Resort Community. The proposed amendment to the Future Land Use Map utilizes and implements the proposed Sweetwater Resort Community land use category on approximately 1,291 acres located east of Dekle Beach and north of Keaton Beach, in Taylor County. This area is part of the limited area available for private development along the coastline in Taylor County, as most of the coastal lands are under government protection or management for conservation. The proposed amendments provide for a balance between the need to protect natural resources and the need to provide economic opportunities in Taylor County. This section of the Comprehensive Plan amendment application package will present a justification for the proposed text and Future Land Use Map amendments.

##### A. Land Use Need

###### Development Potential from Existing Future Land Use Designations

The Agricultural/Rural Residential future land use category is currently designated on 1,246 acres of the amendment site (Figure 2 and Table 2). This land use category allows 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres which results in  $1,246 \text{ acres} / 1 \text{ unit per } 5 \text{ acres} = 249$  residential units. This land use category also allows limited neighborhood commercial and public uses, up to 5,000 square feet per 5 acre parcel. The neighborhood commercial centers allow for small scale retail and service establishments to serve the convenience needs of the surrounding residential area. Thus a substantial amount of neighborhood commercial space could be developed on the Agriculture/Rural Residential land use designation within the amendment site. A reasonable amount of development, within the context of the area, would be to assume 5,000 square feet per 50 acres of Agriculture/Rural Residential land use. This would allow  $124,600$  square feet of neighborhood commercial development ( $1,246 \text{ acres} / 50 \text{ acres} * 5,000 \text{ square feet}$ ).

The Mixed Use - Urban Development future land use category is currently designated on 45 acres of the amendment site (Figure 2 and Table 2). The land use category requires a minimum mix of three land uses including residential, commercial and recreation, and allows for public and institutional land uses. The land use category allows up to 20 dwelling units per acre where central water and sewer are provided. Residential uses shall comprise a minimum of 50 percent and not exceed 75 percent of the gross acreage. Commercial land uses shall comprise a minimum of 10 percent and shall not exceed 25 percent of the gross acreage. Recreational land uses shall comprise a minimum of 5 percent and not exceed 15 percent of the gross acreage.

One scenario for a mix of uses in the Mixed Use - Urban Development land use category that maximizes residential and commercial use would be 70 percent residential use, 25 percent commercial use and 5 percent recreation use of the gross acreage of the site. This mix of uses results in  $45 \text{ acres} * 70\% = 31.5$  gross acres of residential use, which yields  $31.5 \text{ acres} * 20 \text{ units per acre} = 630$  residential units. The mix of uses also results in  $45 \text{ acres} * 25\% = 11.25$  gross acres of commercial use, which yields  $11.25 \text{ acres} * 43,560 \text{ square feet per acre} = 490,050$  square feet of commercial floor space.

Thus, in summary, the two existing, future land use map designations within the amendment site allows for a total development potential of 879 residential units and 614,650 square feet of commercial floor space and a substantial amount of neighborhood commercial space (see Table 2).

**TABLE 2  
ADOPTED FLUM MAXIMUM DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**

	<b>Future Land Use Category</b>	<b>Development Type</b>	<b>Adopted FLUM Maximum</b>	<b>Total Adopted FLUM Maximum Development</b>
<b>Residential Development</b>	AG/RR	Condos (d.u.)	249	879
	MU-UD	Condos (d.u.)	630	
<b>Non-Residential Development</b>	AG/RR	Neighborhood Commercial (sq.ft.)	124,600	614,650
	MU-UD	Commercial (sq.ft.)	490,050	

Source: WilsonMiller, Inc. (Jan 2010)

Development Allowed by Proposed Sweetwater Resort Community Designation.

The proposed Sweetwater Resort Community future land use category restricts development to 624 residential units, 400 hotel rooms and 150,000 square feet of commercial space. The resort hotels are conservatively estimated to total no more than 325,000 square feet based on 700 square feet per hotel room (includes hallways and other ancillary space) and 2 conference rooms at 22,500 square feet each. Thus the total proposed commercial space, including hotels and conventional retail and office uses, equals 475,000 square feet.

Thus the proposed change in future land use designation for the amendment site will result in a decrease in the development potential of 255 residential units and 139,650 square feet of commercial space (see Table 3).

**TABLE 3  
PROPOSED CHANGE IN DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL**

	<b>Total Adopted FLUM Maximum Development</b>	<b>Proposed FLUM Maximum Development</b>	<b>Estimated Change</b>
<b>Residential Development</b>	879	624	-255
<b>Non-Residential Development</b>	614,650	475,000	-139,650

Source: WilsonMiller, Inc. (Jan 2010)

### 2035 Future Residential Land Use Allocation in Comprehensive Plan

The data and analysis for the EAR-based amendments to the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan, revised September 22, 2009, in Section IV. 2035 Population Projection Analysis indicates that 25,209 new residential units are needed to implement the revised and updated 2035 comprehensive plan. Of that total, 21,509 units are allocated to the 13 Urban Planning Areas proposed to be designated on the 2035 Future Land Use Map. The remaining 3,252 new units are available for landowners outside the 13 Urban Planning Areas to propose amendments to the 2035 future land use map.

The EAR-based amendments have been submitted by Taylor County to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for review, and it is anticipated that adoption of these amendments will occur in 2010.

### Commercial Land Use Need in Taylor County Coastal Area

Along the portion of CR 361 that runs parallel to the central coast in Taylor County, there are numerous residential subdivisions from Leisure Retreats at the north end to Dark Island at the south end. The list of subdivisions includes Leisure Retreats, Dekle Beach, Ezell Beach, Keaton Beach, Sawgrass Estates, Lindsay Island, Cedar Island and Dark Island. The only existing commercial uses in this coastal area are a convenience store and small restaurant near/in Keaton Beach. In order to obtain their retail/services needs, residents and seasonal visitors in this coastal area routinely make trips of 20-25 miles to commercial centers in Perry.

The proposal in the Sweetwater Land Use Category for 150,000 square feet of commercial space primarily along CR 361 will greatly shorten and reduce many of the existing, long distance routine trips to Perry by satisfying many of this coastal area's retail/services needs. It will also provide commercial opportunities for the proposed 624 residential units and 400 hotel rooms for the amendment site. Thus, this new proposed commercial center within the amendment site will greatly decrease VMTs in this coastal area and consequently reduce greenhouse gases generated by the existing and future potential vehicle trips to Perry.

## **B. Economic Benefits**

Florida is mired in an economic recession that has caused its 11.8 percent unemployment rate as of December 2009, to be higher than the rest of the United States on the average. Furthermore, the underemployment rate in Florida is estimated at 17.2 percent (December 2009, United States Bureau of Labor Statistics). Underemployment is a measure that includes the unemployed, those discouraged workers that are not seeking employment and those part time workers seeking full time employment. Taylor County's unemployment rate of 11.8 percent equals that of Florida's statewide unemployment rate (Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation). Taylor County's unemployment rate ranks in the top 45 percent of the Florida list of highest unemployment rate by County. The unemployment rate in Taylor County has increased by 46 percent over the past year as the rate has increased from 8.1 percent

in December 2008 to 11.8 percent December 2009. In Taylor County, 1,089 persons were unemployed as of December 2009.

The traditional economic backbone of Taylor County has been predominantly timber industries and the associated pulp and paper mills. However, the timber industry is decreasing as the economic driver of the region. Furthermore, in April 2003, Governor Bush designated Taylor County as a RACEC, and in June 2008 Governor Christ reissued the designation. An area designated as a RACEC receives priority attention from state agencies to ensure its communities receive the technical resources and other assistance needed to further economic development initiatives and local projects. Consequently, the County is in a critical position in which it must consider and implement new initiatives to diversify its economy in order to create jobs for the County's residents.

The proposed plan amendment to develop a resort community will support the County's effort to reduce unemployment in Taylor County by providing substantial, new employment opportunities for existing residents in the surrounding communities and other parts of the County. Typical employment generation factors were utilized to determine the total projected employment for the proposed Sweetwater Community amendment. The analysis determined that approximately 685 permanent, non-construction jobs will be created as a result of the development. The amendment proposes 624 total dwelling units; however, only 20 percent of the total dwelling units (125 units) will likely be full-time residents. The resulting jobs-to-housing ratio is 5.5 jobs for every one household (685 total jobs / 125 full-time housing units). This is more than five times the industry average of one job for every one unit occupied by a full-time resident.

**TABLE 4  
PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT FOR THE RESERVE AT SWEETWATER ESTUARY**

<b>Proposed Land Use</b>	<b>Development</b>	<b>Generation Rate</b>	<b>Total Jobs Created</b>
Commercial	150,000 sq.ft.	500 sq.ft./employee	300
Hotel	400 rooms	0.75 employees/room	300
Rental Units	499 units	0.09 employees/unit	45
Golf Course	18 holes	2.23 employees/hole	40
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>685</b>

Source: WilsonMiller, Inc. January 2010.

In addition to the 685 direct jobs projected to be created by the Sweetwater Community, this amendment will also create a substantial number of indirect jobs from industries that will provide services to support the new resort community. Taylor County is part of Florida's "Nature Coast", and the variety of natural resources and recreation opportunities offered within Taylor County makes it a perfect location for nature-based tourism, or ecotourism. Ecotourism is focused on the natural ecological features of an area that promotes conservation and supports sustainable development. According to Dr. Sherie Brezina, UWF/Tourism Studies, ecotourism is the fastest growing segment of tourism, growing at 15 to 20 percent per year. Taylor County is bordered on the west by the Gulf coast shoreline and its inlands include active waterways, natural woodlands, and saltwater marshes. Taylor County offers natural and outdoor recreation opportunities, proximity to the coastline, as well as other major cities in Florida, and

areas for hunting and fishing. Furthermore, coastal Taylor County is a renowned bay scallop fishery. Ecotourism could become an integral part of Taylor County's base economy and actions that help provide for second homes/vacation units, enhanced accessibility, and the opportunity for recreational activities and additional water access are important elements that will help further the development of the County's ecotourism industry. The proposed Sweetwater Resort Community land use category provides a catalyst to establish ecotourism in Taylor County and diversify the economic base.

However, limited access to the Gulf Coast has created a major obstacle for promoting ecotourism as a significant component of the Taylor County rural economy. Access to the coastline within Taylor County is extremely limited. Approximately 88 percent of the Gulf-fronting property in Taylor County is owned or managed by the State of Florida and other public entities. The majority of this coastline is designated on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map as "Conservation." The Applicant is among a few private landowners to own a portion of the remaining 12 percent of land along the coastline. Therefore, the proposed development site is in a unique position to promote ecotourism as a significant component of the Taylor County rural economy.

As part of the limited area available for private development along the coastline in Taylor County, the proposed site represents a tremendous existing environmental-economic investment that can be supportive of regional economics and quality of life. The proposed Future Land Use Map amendment targets a seasonal, resort-oriented niche market with a combination of uses that promotes ecotourism, through proximity and access to the Gulf Coast. The proposed text amendment allows a mixed-use resort community which offers lodging, recreational opportunities such as golfing or sightseeing, and shopping opportunities while still focusing on the preservation of natural open spaces, sensitive lands, and the area's character. Provisions and conditions will maximize the preservation of conservation areas as well as encourage creative design by clustering development onto uplands surrounded by natural open spaces. The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary resort development will serve as a focal point to facilitate ecotourism along the coast due to the community's proximity to the water and the Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail, the provision of places and opportunities for wildlife viewing areas, and the creation of user-friendly access to the coastline and natural resources.

The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary development will fulfill demand for resort lodging that is in close proximity to the Gulf of Mexico and local rivers. As previously mentioned, Taylor County has a significant portion of its coastal land (88 percent) in public ownership. Better utilization and access to this coastal area will become a catalyst for improving the quality of life for generations to come. Enhanced access and supporting uses such as those proposed in the Sweetwater Resort Community land use category will greatly aid the County's ecotourism industry. While Taylor County does offer three small unincorporated waterfront communities (Keaton Beach, Dekle Beach, and Steinhatchee) with opportunities for outdoor recreation, there are few lodging options for visitors. For example, during scallop season, which runs from July 1st through September 10th, recreational boaters from the entire southeastern United States congregate in the Big Bend area for scallop fishing. In fact, during the summer months, local motels are booked sometimes as far north as Tallahassee for recreational boaters planning to scallop or fish in the coastal waters of Taylor County, as local accommodations are often inadequate due to the heavy influx of customers.

The proposed amendments target this seasonal, resort-oriented niche market and could provide the catalyst to establish ecotourism in Taylor County throughout the year, and diversify the economic base. As mentioned previously, the mixed-use resort community will include 624 residential units, which are anticipated to be used for both permanent and second/vacation homes. 400 hotel rooms are also proposed within the master-planned resort community. The first 18-hole gold course in Taylor County will also be located within the proposed amendment area. Through the provision of overnight lodging, user-friendly access to coastline and natural resources, and recreational opportunities such as golfing, the proposed resort development will attract more visitors to Taylor County. This will create new job opportunities associated with ecotourism as a basic industry and support secondary job growth in other basic and non-basic industries in Taylor County.

### **C. Environmental Consideration**

The proposed amendments also balance the need to provide economic opportunities for residents with the need to protect natural resources. Florida's "Nature Coast" is recognized for its natural beauty and resources. The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary is located within the Steinhatchee River Basin and is hydrologically connected to the Gulf of Mexico. It is located adjacent to the Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserve. The proposed amendments ensure that development and related recreational activities are conducted in an environmentally sensitive manner that is compatible with the rural character of Taylor County. Development will be clustered on the uplands, away from environmentally sensitive areas. There will be no impacts to marine resources or seagrasses. The development will be served by central water and sanitary sewer facilities. Stormwater runoff will be treated by proposed wet detention stormwater management systems and will meet water quality standards required by the SRWMD and FDEP for OFW. Approximately 1,017 acres, or 79 percent, of the proposed amendment site will be deemed conservation area.

Furthermore, extensive efforts have been undertaken by the Applicant to avoid and minimize wetland impacts within the proposed amendment site. Rule 9J-5.013(3), F.A.C., outlines provisions for the protection and mitigation of wetlands. Rule 9J-5.013(3) (a), F.A.C, states, "Wetlands and the natural functions of wetlands shall be protected and conserved". Rule 9J-5.013(3)(b), F.A.C, continues, "Future land uses which are incompatible with the protection and conservation of wetlands and wetland functions shall be directed away from wetlands...Land uses shall be distributed in a manner that minimizes the effect and impact on wetlands". Direct impacts to freshwater wetlands from the proposed development are approximately 25.74 acres. Rule 9J-5.013(3) (b), F.A.C, also states, "Where incompatible land uses are allowed to occur, mitigation shall be considered as one means to compensate for loss of wetlands functions." Mitigation will be provided to offset proposed wetland impacts and will be determined using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.

To further minimize environmental impacts associated with the development and to protect surrounding natural areas, development within The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary will utilize the principles and resources of Low Impact Development (LID), which includes directing more intense development in upland areas; utilizing swales and

pervious pavements to minimize stormwater runoff; implementing water conservation measures and reuse, when feasible; and integrating natural areas and wildlife corridors. The development will also follow the specific building qualifications for meeting Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards, including conserving energy and water, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and decreasing the amount of materials sent to landfills. Finally, the golf course will obtain and maintain the designation at the Silver Level in the Audubon International Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Program in order to achieve heightened water quality and conservation benefits. The Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program application for The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary has been approved for review at the Bronze Level; however, application for Silver Level will be submitted. Please refer to Appendix H for a copy of correspondence with Audubon International.

As indicated above, the proposed amendments will provide significant public interest benefits to the region and the State. Due to its location and size, the proposed amendment site is in a unique position to promote ecotourism. This opportunity for ecotourism will significantly contribute to the economic stability of Taylor County. The proposed Sweetwater Resort Community land use category and Future Land Use Map amendment will also help to conserve and accentuate the existing natural features in Taylor County, while fostering the demand for recreational resort development and supporting long-term economic development through ecotourism and RACEC initiatives.

**V. DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY/ADJACENT USES**

The proposed amendment site is located in unincorporated Taylor County, situated between Dekle Beach Road and County Road 361. The subject site comprises approximately 1,291 acres in Sections 22, 23, 26, and 27, Township 7 South, Range 7 East. The site is currently designated “Agricultural-Rural Residential” and “Mixed Use – Urban Development” on the Taylor County Future Land Use Map.

The site consists of unimproved land with several access roads within the property boundaries. These roads typically transect wetland habitat areas and have been utilized for silvicultural and other commercial activities (e.g., access roads for hunt club members), in the past.

The northern boundary and a portion of the eastern boundary of the proposed amendment site are adjacent to vacant unimproved land designated “Agricultural-Rural Residential” on the Taylor County Future Land Use Map. These lands are utilized for silvicultural and/or other commercial activities. Along the eastern boundary is also a single family community, Oak Ridge Estates. The western boundary of the site is adjacent to the Dekle Beach community, and the southern boundary is adjacent to the Keaton Beach community and the smaller neighborhoods of Ezell Beach and Gibson Road; all of which are currently designated “Mixed Use - Urban Development” on the Taylor County Future Land Use Map.

**VI. NATURAL RESOURCES/FEATURES OF SUBJECT PROPERTY**

**A. Site Description**

The proposed amendment site is situated between Dekle Beach Road and County Road 361 in unincorporated Taylor County; refer to Figure 1 *Location Map*. The site encompasses approximately 1,291 acres and consists of unimproved land historically used for silvicultural activities. Several roads have been constructed within the property boundaries to provide access for silviculture operations.

The project site terrain ranges from flat level topography to a gentle slope with occasional depressions or borrow pit excavations. The site ranges in elevation from approximately two feet (2') to twenty-five feet (25') NGVD with higher elevations near County Road 361 and decreasing elevations towards the coastline.

**B. Land Use**

Birkitt Environmental Services (Birkitt), Inc. conducted an analysis of the land uses/land covers of the proposed amendment site. Ecological communities within the proposed amendment site were characterized based on the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Florida Land Use Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS, 1999). On-site habitats included Hardwood Coniferous Mixed (434), Freshwater Marsh (641), Saltwater Marsh (642), and Mixed Wetland Hardwood (617). Table 5 presents the land uses/land covers on the site, acreage of each, and the percentage of the total site acreage.

**TABLE 5  
EXISTING HABITAT (FLUCCS)**

Habitat Type	Acres	Percentage of Total Site Acreage
Hardwood/Conifer Mixed (434)	233.4	18%
Mixed Wetland Hardwoods (617)	718.6	56%
Freshwater Marshes (641)	29.10	2%
Saltwater Marshes (642)	309.6	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,290.7</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Birkitt 2010

Hardwood Coniferous Mixed (434) is characterized as forested areas in which neither upland conifers nor hardwoods achieve sixty-six (66) percent crown canopy dominance (FLUCCS, 1999). The Hardwood Coniferous Mixed communities are upland communities and would incur a large portion of the project impacts. The majority of this habitat has been subject to exempt silviculture activities. This land use cover comprises eighteen (18) percent of the proposed amendment site.

Mixed Wetland Hardwoods (617) are characterized as wetland hardwood communities that are composed of a large variety of hardwood species which are tolerant of hydric conditions, yet exhibit an ill-defined mixture of species. The predominant vegetation in

the mixed wetland hardwoods wetland areas include red maple (*Acer rubrum*), southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*), sweet bay (*Magnolia virginiana*), swamp bay (*Persea palustris*), bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), pond cypress (*Taxodium ascendens*), red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), water oak (*Quercus nigra*), dahoon holly (*Ilex cassine*), and cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*). This land use cover comprises fifty-six (56) percent of the proposed amendment site.

Freshwater Wetlands (641) include marshes and seasonal flooded basins and meadows. Two of the freshwater wetlands within the project area are historic borrow pits that have naturally recruited wetland vegetation. The predominant vegetation in the freshwater wetland areas within the project area include sand cord grass (*Spartina bakerii*), sawgrass (*Cladium jamaicense*), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), bushy broomgrass (*Andropogon glomeratus*), star rush (*Dichromena colorata*), and beakrush (*Rhynchospora* spp.). The predominant vegetation in the borrow pits include cattail (*Typha* sp.) and duckweed (*Lemna minor*). This land use cover comprises two (2) percent of the proposed amendment site.

Saltwater Marsh (642) areas within the project area predominantly consist of black needle rush (*Juncus roemerianus*), smooth cord grass (*Spartina alterniflora*), saltmeadow cordgrass (*Spartina patens*), and saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*). This land use cover comprises twenty-four (24) percent of the proposed amendment site.

For further details and the location of each of the current land covers, please refer to Figure 5 *Existing Habitat*.

### C. Soils

Soil types within the proposed amendment site were characterized according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) Soil Survey of Taylor County, Florida. Three major soil types were identified within the proposed amendment area, with a total of nine (9) soils types within the project area. The upland areas predominantly consist of Leon Fine Sand, rarely flooded. The estuarine areas predominantly consist of Bayvi Muck, frequently flooded; while the herbaceous and forested wetland areas contain Yellowjacket and Maurepas muck, Clara and Bodiford frequently flooded soils, and Mandarin-Hurricane complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes. Table 6 presents the soils on the site, acreage of each, and the percent of the total site acreage.

**TABLE 6  
SOILS CLASSIFICATIONS**

Soil Type	Acres	Percentage of Total Site Acreage
Leon Fine Sand	329.0	25%
Yellowjacket and Maurepas mucks	477.2	37%
Mandarin-Hurricane Complex	8.2	1%
Clara and Bodiford	81.1	6%
Bayvi Muck	318.8	25%
Kershaw	27.0	2%
Melvina	0.7	0%
Ortega	28.2	2%
Ridgewood	19.5	2%
*Other	1.1	0%
Total	1,290.7	100%

\*Includes areas without soil classification/open water.  
Source: Birkitt (2010)

Leon Fine Sand, rarely flooded

Leon Fine Sand, rarely flooded, is usually found on the lower Coastal Plain in flatwood areas (Watts et al, 2000). This soil was dominant in the areas delineated as upland habitat by Birkitt. The surface layer is 0-6 inches of very dark gray, fine sand. The subsurface layer is 6-11 inches of grayish brown, fine sand and 11-25 inches of light gray fine sand. It is poorly drained, has a moderately rapid permeability in the subsoil, low available water capacity, and a nearly level slope. This soil type is predominantly associated with timber production and wildlife habitats. It has a moderately high productivity potential in woodlands. The woodland species often found in this soil type are slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) and loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*). Leon fine sand, rarely flooded is moderately suited for pasture and haylands. Bahia grass (*Paspalum notatum*) and improved Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) are grasses commonly grown in this habitat type (Watts et al, 2000). This soil type comprises twenty-five (25) percent of the proposed amendment site.

Yellowjacket and Maurepas mucks, frequently flooded

Yellowjacket and Maurepas mucks, frequently flooded, are found in lowland flat and depressions on the lower Coastal Plain. Yellowjacket muck has a surface layer of 0-42 inches of black muck and a subsurface layer of 42-60 inches of very dark gray fine sand. Maurepas muck has a surface layer of 0-25 inches of dark brown muck and a subsurface layer of 25-60 inches of black muck. Both soils are very poorly drained, rapidly permeable throughout the soil profile, have high to a very high available water capacity, a nearly level slope class, flood frequently for long periods and very high organic matter content on the surface layer. Yellowjacket and Maurepas mucks, frequently flooded soils are associated with native vegetation and wildlife habitats (Watts

et al, 2000). This soil type comprises thirty-seven (37) percent of the proposed amendment site.

*Mandarin-Hurricane complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes*

Mandarin-Hurricane complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, soils are found in lowland flatwoods on the lower Coastal Plain. Mandarin soil has a surface layer of 0-7 inches of dark gray fine sand. It has a subsurface layer of 7-15 inches of gray fine sand and 15-26 inches of light gray fine sand. Hurricane soil has a surface layer of 0-8 inches of very dark grayish brown fine sand. It has a subsurface layer of 8-22 inches of light yellowish brown fine sand, 22-32 inches of very pale brown fine sand, 32-48 inches of yellow fine sand, and 48-63 inches of white fine sand. Both soils are somewhat poorly drained, have a nearly level slope class, and have low organic matter content on the surface layer. Mandarin soil is moderately permeable and Hurricane soil has moderately rapid permeability throughout the soil profile. Mandarin has a moderate and Hurricane has a low available water capacity. Mandarin-Hurricane complex, 0 to 3 percent slopes, soils are associated with timber production and wildlife habitats (Watts et al, 2000). This soil type comprises one (1) percent of the proposed amendment site.

*Clara and Bodiford soils, frequently flooded*

Clara and Bodiford, frequently flooded, soils are found in lowland flood plains on the lower Coastal Plain. Clara soil has a surface layer of 0-6 inches of very dark grayish brown mucky fine sand. It has a subsurface layer of 6-19 inches of grayish brown fine sand. Bodiford soil has a surface layer of 0-12 inches of dark reddish brown muck. It has a subsurface layer of 12-18 inches of black mucky fine sand and 18-29 inches of brown fine sand. Both are deep, very poorly drained soils with a nearly level slope class and frequent flooding for long periods. Clara soil has rapid permeability throughout and a moderately low to high content of organic matter in the surface layer. Bodiford soil has moderately slow permeability in the subsoil and a very high content of organic matter in the surface layer. Clara and Bodiford, frequently flooded, soils are associated with native vegetation and wildlife habitats (Watts et al, 2000). This soil type comprises six (6) percent of the proposed amendment site.

*Bayvi Muck, frequently flooded*

Bayvi Muck, frequently flooded, is primarily found in coastal swamps on the lower Coastal Plain in saltmarshes. The surface layer ranges between 1-5 inches of black muck. The subsurface layer consists of 5-17 inches black, mucky, loamy sand and 17-31 inches of very dark grayish brown sand. Bayvi muck is poorly drained, rapidly permeable throughout the soil profile, has a very low available water capacity, a nearly level slope class, and floods frequently for very long periods. Bayvi muck is predominantly associated with native vegetation and wildlife habitats and is not suitable for woodlands, croplands, haylands, pastures, and urban development (Watts et al, 2000). This soil type comprises twenty-five (25) percent of the proposed amendment site.

*Kershaw soils, very deep, excessively drained, rapid or very rapidly permeable soils*

The Kershaw series consists of very deep, excessively drained, rapid or very rapidly permeable soils on uplands and dune-like landscapes of the Coastal Plain. Slopes range

from 2 to 15 percent. Kershaw soils are known locally as scrub oak sand ridges. Kershaw soils are typically associated with woodlands. A few areas have been cleared and planted to coastal bermudagrass or bahiagrass. Native vegetation generally typical of this soil type includes turkey oak, bluejack oak, and scrub live oak with scattered longleaf pine as the overstory and scattered rosemary, palmettos, and clumps of thin grasses in the understory. Lichens cover the surface in some of the open places. Kershaw soils distribution and extent range from Coastal Plain regions of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Texas and possibly Alabama to North Carolina. The series is of moderate extent (USDA-NRCS, 2008). This soil type comprises two (2) percent of the proposed amendment site.

*Melvina soils, very deep, somewhat poorly drained, moderately slowly permeable soils*

The Melvina series consists of very deep, somewhat poorly drained, moderately slowly permeable soils on low ridges of the Eastern Gulf Coast Flatwoods. They formed in sandy and loamy marine sediments underlain by limestone. Slopes range from 0 to 2 percent. Melvina soils are on nearly level, low ridges of the Eastern Gulf Coast Flatwoods. Natural vegetation consists of mixed hardwood and pine. Melvina soils distribution and extent is Northwestern peninsular Florida, (USDA-NRCS, 2008). This soil type comprises less than one (1) percent of the proposed amendment site.

*Ortega soils, moderately well drained soils*

The Ortega series consists of very deep, moderately well drained soils that formed in a sandy deposit on marine terraces. These soils are on nearly level to strongly sloping upland landscapes. Slopes range from 0 to 12 percent. These soils formed in sandy marine or eolian deposits. Ortega soil is moderately well drained. Surface runoff is slow. Permeability is rapid.

Natural vegetation generally typical of this soil type is second growth slash and longleaf pine, turkey and blackjack oak, and scattered saw palmetto with an understory of pineland threeawn, low panicums, and grassleaf goldaster. Many of these soils occur in areas used for tame pasture, timber, and pulpwood production.

Ortega soils distribution and extent range from Northern peninsular Florida, Georgia, to South Carolina, and possibly North Carolina, (USDA-NRCS, 2008). This soil type comprises approximately two (2) percent of the proposed amendment site.

*Ridgewood soils, poorly drained, nearly level soils*

The Ridgewood series consists of somewhat poorly drained, nearly level soils that formed in sandy marine sediments. These soils are on knolls in areas of flatwoods and on low uplands. Slopes range from 0 to 3 percent. These soils are thermic, uncoated Aquic Quartzsammments.

Natural vegetation is a forest of slash and longleaf pine, water, laurel, and live oaks, and scattered turkey oak. The understory consists of waxmyrtle, bluestems, sumac, blue maidencane, blackberry, gallberry, scattered sawpalmetto, some wiregrass, and other grasses. Some areas have been cleared and are in pasture. This soil type comprises approximately two (2) percent of the proposed amendment site.

For further details, please refer to Figure 6 *Soil Classifications*.

#### **D. Wetlands**

In total, there are approximately 1,057 acres of wetlands within the proposed amendment area boundary. Wetlands have been estimated using ground truthing and data gathering with specific data points taken in all ecologic habitat communities and along the wetlands line. The wetland limits have been partially reviewed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) during field visits in 2009 and additional guidance on establishing the remainder of the wetland jurisdictional limits has been provided. The wetland lines are shown on Figure 8 *Wetlands*.

Extensive efforts have been undertaken to avoid and minimize wetland impacts while maintaining an economically viable nature-based resort development. No impacts to marine resources or seagrasses are proposed. Direct impacts to freshwater wetlands from the proposed development are approximately 25.74 acres. No saltmarsh impacts are proposed. The only activity in the saltmarsh is the construction of boardwalks which will be designed at a height that allows vegetation to grow underneath.

Mitigation to offset proposed wetland impacts associated with the development of the amendment area will be provided and will be determined using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.

#### **E. Listed Wildlife Species**

Birkitt conducted listed species surveys of the proposed amendment site on multiple occasions between 2003 and 2009. Pedestrian, vehicular, and boat surveys were conducted by Birkitt biologists in addition to terrestrial and aquatic habitat surveys to determine the presence of any listed species and associated habitats within and adjacent to the proposed amendment area.

The only listed species observed in the vicinity of the project site were various wading birds observed foraging in the salt marshes onsite.

No state or federally listed wildlife is expected to be affected by the proposed development. If gopher tortoises and commensal species are determined to be present, appropriate permits for relocation from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will be obtained and any relocations will be conducted by a certified Authorized Gopher Tortoise Agent.

A wildlife management plan has been developed to prevent any potential adverse effects to listed species or their habitat. Please refer to Appendix A for a copy of the Wildlife Management Plan.

Refer to more detailed discussions below regarding listed and protected species observed or potentially occurring within the proposed amendment area.

Terrestrial Species

According to the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI, 2007), portions of the proposed amendment site appear to be located on or near “Potential Habitat for Rare Species.” The FNAI confirmed that observations of the Florida Mouse (*Podomys floridanus*) have occurred approximately 0.25 mile outside the southernmost boundary of the proposed amendment area. No direct observation of the species has been made, however the Florida Mouse is a commensal species of the Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*). Table 7, below, indicates listed species potentially occurring on-site.

**TABLE 7  
STATE AND FEDERALLY LISTED SPECIES POTENTIALLY ON-SITE**

Species	Federal Designation	State Designation	Likelihood of Occurrence*
Florida Black Bear	Not Listed	Threatened	Unlikely
Florida Mouse	Not Listed	Species of Special Concern	Unlikely
Gopher Tortoise	Not Listed	Threatened	High***
American Alligator	Threatened**	Species of Special Concern**	Moderate
Little Blue Heron	Not Listed	Species of Special Concern	High
Reddish Egret	Not Listed	Species of Special Concern	High
Snowy Egret	Not Listed	Species of Special Concern	High
Tricolored Heron	Not Listed	Species of Special Concern	High
Roseate Spoonbill	Not Listed	Species of Special Concern	High
White Ibis	Not Listed	Species of Special Concern	High

\* Unlikely - preferred habitat does not exist onsite.

Low - preferred habitat may/ may not exist onsite and species is very rare in region.

Moderate - preferred habitat exists onsite and the species is more frequently encountered in the region than the other species listed.

High - preferred habitat exists onsite and the species has been reported in proximity of the site.

\*\* Due to similarity of appearance with the American crocodile.

\*\*\* Within a selected area of the amendment site

Source: Birkitt (2010)

*Florida black bear*

The Florida black bear is listed as a Threatened Species by the FWC. This species utilizes a wide variety of forested communities due to seasonal dietary needs (FNAI-field guide, 2005). Potential habitat for the Florida black bear does occur on-site. However, no element occurrences have been documented on or near the project area. Furthermore, no sightings, tracks, scat, or other signs have been observed. Impacts on Florida black bears are not anticipated to occur, due to sufficient wildlife corridors and suitable habitat adjacent to the proposed amendment site. No black bears have been sited on the property, nor documented by the 2007 FNAI report.

*Wading Birds*

Various listed wading birds could potentially utilize the saltmarshes, freshwater marshes and forested areas on-site for foraging, nesting and/or roosting. Table 8, below, indicates the wading bird species that were observed within the proposed amendment area.

**TABLE 8  
OBSERVED WADING BIRD SPECIES**

<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Designated Status (FWC)</b>
<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	Little blue heron	Species of Special Concern
<i>Egretta rufescens</i>	Reddish egret	Species of Special Concern
<i>Egretta thula</i>	Snowy egret	Species of Special Concern
<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	Tricolored heron	Species of Special Concern
<i>Platalea ajaja</i>	Roseate spoonbill	Species of Special Concern
<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	White ibis	Species of Special Concern

Source: Birkitt (2010)

While listed wading birds have been observed utilizing the site for foraging, no nests have been observed in the proposed amendment area. However, potential habitat for nesting is present. Construction activities would have minimal effect on foraging habitat area because of the limited area affected. Additionally, sufficient adjacent foraging habitat will be available for listed wading birds both during and subsequent to construction activities. No long-term impacts to wading birds are anticipated.

*Florida Mouse*

The Florida mouse is listed by the FWC as a Species of Special Concern. In 1954, eight Florida mice were collected and observed adjacent to the project boundary (FNAI-report, 2003). Furthermore, an FNAI element occurrence of the Florida mouse has been documented approximately 0.25 mile from the southernmost boundary of the proposed amendment area. The habitat requirements of the Florida mouse consist of xeric upland communities with sandy soils. No direct or indirect observation of this species has been made, however the Florida Mouse is a commensal species of the gopher tortoise and potential habitat for both species does exist within the northeast portion of the proposed amendment site.

*Gopher Tortoise*

The gopher tortoise is currently listed as Threatened by the FWC in the State of Florida and is protected under Rule 68A-27.004 F.A.C. The species is not currently federally protected. The gopher tortoise typically inhabits relatively well-drained, sandy soils and is generally associated with longleaf pine and xeric oak sandhills. It also occurs in scrub, xeric hammock, pine flatwoods, dry prairie, coastal grasslands and dunes, mixed hardwood-pine communities, and a variety of disturbed habitats such as pastures, fields, and the shoulders of roadways (Diemer, 1986; Breininger et al., 1994). Gopher tortoises are typically found in these dry upland habitats, and excavate deep burrows that are readily noticeable. Suitable gopher tortoise habitats, as described above, exist on the

proposed project site; therefore, they could potentially occur within the project boundaries. However, no direct or indirect (burrows, etc) observations have been made.

The potential for adverse impacts to gopher tortoises may occur in the northeast corner of the proposed amendment area; therefore, a formal gopher tortoise survey will be conducted prior to development. In the event of presence of this species within the project site, a relocation permit will be obtained from the FWC for relocation to an approved recipient site by an Authorized Gopher Tortoise Agent. If gopher tortoises are found onsite, they would be relocated; therefore, no direct impacts to the species will occur.

#### *American Alligator*

American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*) could potentially occur within the proposed amendment area or on adjacent habitat. Some of the freshwater habitats on-site could provide suitable habitat for the American alligator. However, the majority of the available habitats located within the proposed amendment area are not preferred as habitat for this species for a permanent residence (FNAI, 2007). As such, American Alligators are not expected to inhabit wetlands on the proposed amendment site. Their occurrence has not been documented by the FNAI, nor observed on-site by Birkitt scientists. Therefore, proposed activities are expected to have minimal or no impact on this species.

#### *Marine Species*

##### *West Indian Manatee*

Manatees are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and the Florida Manatee Sanctuary Act of 1978 and there are civil and criminal penalties for harming, harassing, or killing manatees. The coastal waters in the vicinity of the proposed amendment site are known to be utilized by the West Indian Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*); however these waters are not designated as Federal Manatee Protection Areas for the West Indian Manatee (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2003). Additionally, there are no known warm water aggregation spots (power plant discharge pipes, large springs with navigable access to the Gulf of Mexico, etc.) or designated primary refuges located near the proposed amendment area, which would attract large populations of manatees during winter months.

No adverse impacts to manatees are expected to occur as a result of the proposed development of the proposed amendment site. Only non-motorized vessels are permitted to utilize the canoe/kayak launch area and no in water construction activities are proposed that would affect manatees.

##### *Sea Turtles*

Florida's sea turtles are protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973 (CFR 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) and the FWC state list of protected animals as defined in the Rules 39-27.003, 39-27.004, and 39-27.005, F.A.C. Of those species potentially found in Florida coastal waters, green sea turtles, leatherback sea turtles, hawksbill turtles, and

Kemp's ridley turtles are federally and state listed as Endangered and the Florida population of loggerhead sea turtles is federally and state listed as Threatened.

There are five sea turtle species that have been documented to utilize coastal Florida habitats. The most commonly found sea turtle species on Florida's Gulf Coast are the loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and the Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*) (Milton and Lutz 2003, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service—Threatened and Endangered Species System Website).

Due to the lack of sandy beaches in the Keaton Beach area, the turtles may use the adjacent coastal waters as a feeding ground and not for nesting. Furthermore, suitable nesting habitat is absent from the proposed amendment area. No sandy beaches occur within the project area and portions of the saltmarsh where activities are proposed to occur are not accessible to sea turtles. Therefore, no adverse impacts to sea turtles are expected to occur as a result of the proposed development of the proposed amendment site. In addition, only non-motorized vessels will be permitted to utilize the canoe/kayak launch area.

#### *Other Non-listed Species of Interest*

##### *Bald eagle*

The bald eagle was delisted from its previously "Threatened" status by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on August 8, 2007. The FWC delisted the bald eagle as a Threatened Species as of April 2008. This species utilizes areas close to coastal areas, bays, rivers, lakes, or other bodies of water that provide sufficient concentrations of food sources, such as fish (FNAI, 2007). According to the FWC eagle nest locator database (FWC, 2005), two bald eagle nests [one active (TA002) and one inactive (TA003)] are located near the proposed amendment site. The active nest, TA002, is the element occurrence of bald eagle documented by the FNAI. Ground-truthing was conducted by Birkitt biologists to confirm the presence and activity of these nests in 2005. Birkitt biologists confirmed the presence of TA002, and observed a bald eagle flying in the vicinity of the nest. TA003 was not observed. The last observation was recorded in the FWC eagle nest locator database in 1983, and FWC last checked the nest in 2003. Therefore, it is assumed that nest TA003 is no longer active or present, based on Birkitt observations and the FWC's eagle nest locator database. A new eagle nest was also observed in the southern portion of the proposed amendment area in 2009 and has been determined to be active.

Rule 68A-16.002 F.A.C., states that proposed activities should be consistent with the FWC Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (2008). The Bald Eagle Management Guidelines and the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines (USFWS, 2007) suggest that activities conducted within 660 feet of active or alternative eagle nests be minimized. Although, the nest is located in proximity to proposed development areas, no direct impacts to the nest are planned and no construction will occur during nesting season. For the location of the eagle nest in relation to the proposed amendment area, refer to Figure 7 Eagle Nest Locations.

All requirements of the Bald Eagle Management Guidelines will be met. A wildlife management plan has been developed to prevent any potential adverse effects to this species. Please refer to Appendix A for a copy of the Wildlife Management Plan.

#### **F. Historic and Cultural Resources**

Cultural resources research was originally conducted for the proposed amendment area on behalf of Birkitt. The survey was conducted in compliance with Chapter 267 of the Florida Statutes, Chapter 1A-46 F.A.C. and the standards of the Florida Division of Historical Resources. An assessment report of this cultural resource assessment survey was received by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on March 15, 2007. A search of the Florida Master Site files (FMSF) found no previously recorded cultural resources within one mile of the proposed amendment area. However, Janus Research located one archaeological site (8TA387) and the remnants of a Civil War salt works site (8TA401) within the proposed amendment area. An additional letter was sent to SHPO in December 2009 to obtain the presence/absence of cultural and historical resources for the revised project area. The area added to the proposed project area consists of approximately 143 acres in the northeast corner adjacent to county road 361. A response from SHPO received January 2010 indicated that no previously recorded cultural resources have been found in the revised project area. Please refer to Figure 9 Cultural Resources General Location for the existing cultural resources data found onsite.

According to the existing cultural resource assessment, the site, 8TA387, is presumed to be a habitation site at which late stage tool production activities occurred. Due to a small intact midden layer, the site is considered potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Site 8TA401, Dekle Beach Confederate Salt Works, spans an area of 8.5 acres and is located in the west central portion of the proposed amendment area, extending into the saltmarsh along the Gulf of Mexico. Site 8TA401 consists of five salt works constructed and used by the Confederate Army during the Civil War. According to SHPO site 8TA401 is also potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP.

Consequently, an Avoidance and Treatment Plan has been developed by Janus Research for the proposed amendment area in order to preserve Site 8TA401 and treat Site 8TA387. The plan was developed in conjunction with recommendations from the SHPO and is written in accordance with Chapter 267 Florida Statutes, Florida Historical Resources Act, as implemented through 1A-46 Florida Administration Code. The proposed development of the proposed amendment site has been planned completely around the Salt Works, so as not to impact any of the five areas in Site 8TA401. Impacts to Site 8TA387 will be avoided and/or minimized by design, with unavoidable impacts to be mitigated.

Further cultural resources survey work was conducted in August and September 2007 to incorporate the conceptual golf course site location. This cultural resource survey identified three additional archaeological sites 8TA406, 8TA407 and 8TA408. None of these sites were deemed eligible for listing in the NRHP by SHPO due to the lack of integrity from disturbances associated with historic land clearing and logging activities.

An Avoidance and Treatment Plan was submitted to SHPO and approved by Frederick Gaske, SHPO and Director Florida Division of Historic Resources on November 14, 2007. Mr. Gaske also concurred with the findings of Janus Research that archeological sites 8TA406 – 8TA408 are not eligible for listing in the NHRP in a letter date October 8, 2007. Please refer to Appendix B for copies of all cultural resources agency correspondence.

## **G. Natural Resources**

The proposed amendment area is located adjacent to the Big Bend Seagrass Aquatic Preserve. The Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserve is approximately 945,000 acres and was established in 1985, Chapter 18-20 FAC/Chapter 253.395 FS. The Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserve consists mainly of a large, remote, and undeveloped expanse of submerged seagrasses and nearshore marshlands located along some 150 miles of the northeast coast of the Gulf of Mexico, where the Florida peninsula joins the panhandle. Numerous estuaries, which nurture a diverse flora and fauna, are formed at the confluence of the many rivers and streams that flow into this preserve. Open waters and submerged bay bottoms of these estuaries support numerous species of commercially and recreationally significant fish. The proposed development plans will provide passive recreational access to this important natural resource. Extensive efforts have been made to insure that proposed development will not affect this natural resource of the state. Efforts include: prohibition of motorized vessels, treatment of stormwater to the heightened water quality standards for an OFW, clustering development on upland portions of the property, and committing to certify the golf course in the Audubon International Signature Sanctuary program at the Silver Level.

The golf course will obtain and maintain the designation at the Silver Level in the Audubon International Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Program in order to achieve heightened water quality and conservation benefits. The Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program application for The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary has been approved for review at the Bronze Level; however, application for Silver Level will be submitted. Please refer to Appendix H for a copy of correspondence with Audubon International.

Residents of and visitors to the proposed development shall be allowed to access this natural resource via proposed boardwalks, an observation area and a canoe/ kayak launch. Along the passive recreation boardwalks, signs will be posted providing information on the cultural resources and natural environment found in and around the area. These activities are clearly the type authorized by the Aquatic Preserve Act.

**VII. FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

The proposed Future Land Use Map amendment to the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan consists of changing the Future Land Use Map designation of approximately 1,291+/- acres of land from “Agricultural/Rural Residential” and “Mixed Use – Urban Development” to “Sweetwater Resort Community”. The maximum changes in dwelling units and commercial square footage is shown in Table 9, below.

**TABLE 9  
MAXIMUM NET INCREASE IN DWELLING UNITS  
AND COMMERCIAL SQUARE FOOTAGE**

	Future Land Use Category	Development Type	Adopted FLUM Maximum	Total Residential Adopted FLUM Maximum	Proposed FLUM Maximum	Estimated Change
<b>Residential Development</b>	AG/RR	Condos (d.u.)	249	879	624	-255
	MU-UD	Condos (d.u.)	630			
<b>Non-Residential Development</b>	AG/RR	Neighborhood Commercial (sq.ft.)*	124,600	614,650	475,000	-139,650
	MU-UD	Commercial (sq.ft.)**	490,050			

\* Assumes 5,000 sq.ft. per 50 acres

\*\*Assumes 700 sq.ft. per hotel room (includes hallways, and other ancillary spaces) and 2 conference rooms at 22,500 sq.ft. each. Room size for a typical Residence Inn. Total hotel = 325,000 sq.ft. and Retail/Office = 150,000 sq.ft.

**Five-Year Financial Feasibility**

Florida Statute 163.3177(3)(a)5 requires that Comprehensive Plans and therefore comprehensive plan amendments must not degrade the adopted level of service (LOS) standards and must be financially feasible within the next five years. It is anticipated that much of the proposed development will be built within the five to ten-year planning timeframe. Proposed Text Amendment #2 will revise Table VIII-1: Five Year Schedule of Capital Improvements in the Capital Improvements Element to reflect the necessary improvements to maintain the LOS standards for the potable water and wastewater treatment system. The proposed development is not anticipated to degrade the LOS below the adopted standard for solid waste, stormwater, transportation, recreation and open space, schools or hurricane evacuation therefore no improvements are necessary. Refer to the sections below for the detailed analysis.

**A. Potable Water**

The local potable water provider for the amendment site is TCW&SD. The County adopted LOS standard for potable water use is 100 gallons per capita per day.

The potable water system of the local provider currently has a permitted maximum daily production capacity of 360,000 gallons per day (gpd) and annual average daily

production capacity of 128,500 gpd. Maximum build-out of the proposed development would result in a projected potable water demand increase of approximately 1.24 million gallons per day (MGD). For complete details regarding potable water capacity, refer to the Public Facilities Impact Analysis, found in Appendix C.

According to TCW&SD staff, the current demand on the system is presently near its capacity and does not have adequate capacity for the proposed development. However, a new well or wells could be constructed to furnish the additional potable water demand for the development for the "Maximum Development Scenario". According to the SRWMD there are no indications that projected demands will exceed the available supply for the next 20 years. See SRWMD response letter concerning available potable water capacity, included in Appendix C.

All potable water needs for the proposed resort development shall be serviced by a central water system. The developer shall provide all necessary water service infrastructure to supply the development, which will ultimately be privately maintained by the developer, a home/condominium owners association, homeowners association, property owners association, or a Community Development District, if approved.

## **B. Sanitary Sewer**

The TCW&SD's wastewater facility is the service provider for the proposed amendment site. The existing TCW&SD WWTP has a design capacity of 0.08 MGD or 80,000 gpd. The facility is anticipating a 40,000 gpd expansion in the near future. However, due to restrictions that may be imposed on the new capacity once it is available, it is unlikely that sewer service will be available to serve the proposed resort community.

Maximum build-out of the proposed development will produce a wastewater flow of approximately 0.31 MGD. See Appendix C for the estimated wastewater flows produced by the proposed development. The estimated unit wastewater flows generated for the proposed development for each residential unit is 250 gpd. The 250 gpd provided for each residential unit is consistent with the 100 gallons per capita per day sanitary sewer LOS standard adopted by Taylor County. The other uses will be provided service based upon Table 1, 64E-6 F.A.C, and will meet the LOS standard for sanitary sewer adopted by Taylor County.

Based on the size of the existing WWTP and the anticipated flows from the proposed development, the existing WWTP does not have sufficient capacity to connect the subject development nor is it feasible to expand the existing WWTP for the proposed development.

A new WWTP could be designed and constructed on TCW&SD's property adjacent to the existing plant. According to the WWTP Site Analysis, see Appendix D, a new plant could process the additional wastewater flows generated from the proposed development. The new plant will use the AWT process which produces an effluent of higher quality than achieved by traditional secondary treatment processes. However, if a hydrogeologic study determines that a new plant using a secondary treatment level similar to the existing WWTP will not impact the Aquatic Preserve, then it may be constructed instead of an AWT plant.

The developer will provide a method of wastewater treatment and disposal that is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and which shall include a central sanitary sewer system to service the development. The developer may create, expand, or cause to be expanded the existing disposal service infrastructures for the development. In addition, the developer may create a new sewer district and sewer plant and/or Community Development District for the development.

#### Water Quality Effects

Nitrogen removal in a WWTP spray field application generally follows three pathways: crop uptake, direct volatilization of nitrogen or ammonia gas, and denitrification. In addition, adsorption of nitrogen to soil particles takes place throughout the aquifer. Crop uptake is the primary source of nitrogen removal in wastewater effluent spray fields.

Using an effluent spray field application rate of 2 inches per acre per week and an effluent concentration of 3 mg/L of nitrogen, a total of 70 pounds of nitrogen will be applied to each acre of spray field annually. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Process Design Manual titled "Land Application of Municipal Wastewater Effluents" (September 2006) indicates that properly maintained Bermuda grass, which is the crop proposed for the new WWTP spray field, typically takes up 300 pounds of nitrogen per acre per year. Due to crop uptake, volatilization from spray field application and denitrification within the shallow soils, it is expected that nitrogen concentrations should not increase in the aquifer as a result of the spray field application. Therefore, it is anticipated that the concentration of nitrogen in the groundwater from the new WWTP will not have an adverse impact on the Aquatic Preserve.

### **C. Solid Waste**

Solid waste disposal for the proposed development will be transported to the Aucilla Area Solid Waste Facility, a Class I Landfill. The facility is managed by the Aucilla Area Solid Waste Administration, an entity that was created by an interlocal agreement between four counties: Dixie, Jefferson, Taylor, and Madison. The purpose of the Aucilla Area Solid Waste Facility is to facilitate the efficient and economic disposal of solid waste generated within the four participating counties. The facility is located approximately 45 miles north of the proposed development, and approximately one mile southeast of Greenville in Madison County.

According to Aucilla Area Solid Waste Administration staff, the facility currently processes an average of 150 to 300 tons per day. The FDEP permit states the facility will not receive more than 500 tons in any one day. The Aucilla facility is not projected to reach full capacity until year 2030.

The Solid Waste Generation Estimate matrix, furnished in Appendix C, provides the calculations for the estimated solid waste generation. At maximum build-out, the development will result in a projected average daily volume solid waste increase of approximately 4.8 tons per day. The additional solid waste generated by the proposed amendment area will be accepted by the Aucilla Area Solid Waste Facility and will not exceed the 0.78 ton per capita per year LOS standard for solid waste adopted by Taylor County.

Solid waste generated by the proposed development will not have a significant impact on the Aucilla facility, as it represents less than a four percent increase in the amount of solid waste on a daily basis. There will be negligible effect on the capacity of the Aucilla Area Solid Waste Facility by waste generated from the subject development.

For complete details regarding solid waste capacity, refer to the Public Facilities Impact Analysis, found in Appendix C.

All solid waste collection within the development will be initially supplied under a private contract and shall be mandatory and enforceable through appropriate covenants or restrictions. Solid waste collection will be supplied to each area of the development as improvements are constructed requiring the service. Taylor County will not be responsible for solid waste collection service within the project site unless the County should in the future institute a solid waste collection service, in which case the County would provide such solid waste collection services to the project on the same basis as generally provided for other residences within the County.

#### **D. Stormwater**

All stormwater runoff from the proposed development activities will be captured and treated as required and will have no negative impact on adjacent water resources or public interests. The proposed stormwater management and drainage system improvements within the project site will be designed in accordance with 40B-4 F.A.C. Additionally, all stormwater shall be managed and treated to existing County and OFW standards. The system will be constructed by the developer and privately maintained.

The on-site stormwater/drainage management system will be designed so that there will be no increase in outflow to adjacent property as a result of the development, as required by the County development standards; and also will be designed to protect adjacent waterways by utilization of best management practices and other innovative techniques. Stormwater runoff will be treated by proposed wet detention stormwater management systems and will meet water quality standards required by the SRWMD and FDEP for OFW. The approved stormwater system will treat rainfall through a series of control structures and ponds. The treated stormwater will meet the heightened State water quality standards for OFW. The required amount of treated runoff discharging to an OFW will be the volume of rainfall from the first 1.5 inches over the drainage area. The runoff, once treated by the proposed wet detention stormwater management systems, will meet criteria required by SRWMD and FDEP regulations. The quality of the treated stormwater will meet State standards, thereby not adversely impacting offsite waters.

In addition, the golf course will obtain and maintain the designation at the Silver Level in the Audubon International Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Program in order to achieve heightened water quality and conservation benefits. The Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program application for The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary has been approved for review at the Bronze Level; however, application for Silver Level will be submitted. Please refer to Appendix H for a copy of correspondence with Audubon International. Finally, sediment and erosion control measures, and best management

practices will be utilized during construction to prohibit downstream deposition of sediment and particulates.

#### **E. Transportation**

A Transportation Impact Analysis was conducted for the proposed FLUM Amendment. The 2010 traffic conditions were analyzed along with traffic conditions for the five-year short-term planning horizon (2015) and the ten-year long-term planning horizon (2020). The Transportation Impact Analysis for the proposed FLUM Amendment at final build-out will generate 919 net new PM peak hour trip ends (485 entering; 434 exiting).

Project traffic was assigned to all segments in which the two-way PM peak hour project traffic exceeded five (5) percent of the LOS standard. The analysis indicates that all segments within the study area will be operating within Taylor County's adopted LOS standard with the addition of project traffic for the existing 2010 conditions, the five-year short-term planning horizon (2015), and the ten-year long-term planning horizon (2020). Please see the Transportation Impact Analysis, in Appendix E, for further details.

#### **F. Hurricane Evacuation**

##### **Coastal High Hazard Area**

Approximately 1,128 acres of the proposed amendment area is located within the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA). Based on the acreage and the existing land use designation of Agriculture/Rural Residential, 226 residential units are allowed in the CHHA within the proposed amendment area (1,128 acres / 5 acres = 226 du). The project is proposing a maximum of 190 dwelling units within the CHHA. The proposed amendment will reduce the total number of units allowed within the CHHA by 36 units. Additionally, a development cap within the CHHA is identified in the proposed text language to ensure residential development will not exceed 190 units.

##### **Hurricane Evacuation Study**

A study was conducted to address what effect the proposed additional units would have on the nearest adjacent evacuation routes out of the area and whether there would be a significant effect on evacuation clearance time and time to public shelter. Post, Buckley, Schuh and Jernigan (PBS&J), as the state's leading hurricane evacuation planning firm, was hired in July 2008 to develop the necessary hurricane evacuation model and to perform the necessary base analysis with and without the development. In 2009, Dr. Pruitt, working with WilsonMiller Inc., modified the land use plan so that most of the residential units are outside the CHHA. This January 2010 update reflects the new land use plan for the development.

The subject property is located in Taylor County in the Category 1 surge area/CHHA between Dekle and Keaton Beach. PBS&J divided the county into traffic evacuation zones which reflect areas that are likely to be evacuated for various storm threats. These areas are shown in Appendix F Figure 1. Although Sweetwater is partially in a Category 1-2 hurricane evacuation zone that would be asked to evacuate for any category of

storm, most of the residential units are outside the potential Category 1 surge area and thus by State definition are outside the CHHA.

Taylor County has a fairly limited evacuation road network. The nearest and sole evacuation route for the Sweetwater Resort site is Keaton Beach Road which is CR 361. This route coupled with US 19 into and through Perry constitute the major evacuation routes that would be impacted by the proposed development.

The development will include 624 total residential and 400 conference hotel units. For analysis purposes, 80 percent of the proposed 624 residential units were assumed to be seasonal in nature and 20 percent permanent (year-round) residential units. All of the conference hotel units were treated as seasonal units. Of the residential units, 190 are within the CHHA and 434 are outside the CHHA. Of the hotel units, 150 are within the CHHA and 250 are outside the CHHA. This analysis was performed to determine the maximum theoretical impact of the Sweetwater Resort and thus is a conservative analysis that may overstate the actual impact.

Evacuating Vehicles

The number of additional evacuation vehicles was calculated using very conservative socioeconomic and behavioral parameters and the abbreviated hurricane evacuation transportation model developed by PBS&J for this study. As shown in Table 10, the proposed additional units will add a total of 379 evacuating vehicles to the evacuation road network in a Category 3 hurricane low seasonal occupancy scenario and 1,022 evacuating vehicles in a high occupancy scenario. This analysis assumes that 100 percent of these evacuation vehicles will use CR 361 to leave the area. (While the Category 3 scenario is the benchmark analysis scenario used around the State of Florida, it should be noted that the revised land use concept moves many units outside of the CHHA area thereby reducing congestion for Category 1 evacuations in the area.)

**TABLE 10  
EVACUATION VEHICLES GENERATED**

Dwelling Units	899 seasonal units <u>125 perm resident units</u> 1,024 total units
Seasonal Unit/ Occupancy Levels	20% low seasonal occupancy 85% high seasonal occupancy
Evacuation Participation Rate/ Category 3 Hurricane	100% of all units
Vehicles per Unit	1.10 vehicles per seasonal unit 1.81 vehicles per perm unit
Evacuation Vehicle Usage Rate	80% of permanent unit vehicles 100% of seasonal unit vehicles
Evacuating Vehicles	Cat 3-5 Low Seasonal Occupancy Generated 379 vehicles  Cat 3-5 High Seasonal Occupancy Generated 1,022 vehicles

Source: PBS&J (January 2010)

To calculate the additional unit's *maximum hourly* contribution to the evacuation, the highest hourly percentage (30 percent) of evacuees loading the road network was obtained from the medium behavioral response curve used in most of the hurricane evacuation studies around the state. These curves show the assumed percentage of total evacuees loading the road network by each hour of the evacuation. Using that figure, the proposed development's maximum hourly contribution of evacuation traffic would add 114 to 306 evacuating vehicles to the CR 361 and US 19 evacuation routes depending on seasonal occupancy.

CR 361 and US 19 were analyzed to determine whether the proposed development would utilize 25 percent or more of the segment's LOS E hourly directional maximum service volume and thus have a material adverse effect on the area's evacuation clearance times (according to previous DCA) guidelines on what is a significant impact). Per the calculations shown in Table 11, the additional units will utilize up to 21.7 percent (306 vehicles divided by 1,410 vehicles per hour) of the current LOS E hourly directional maximum service volume for the CR 361 evacuation route for a Category 3-5 hurricane with a high seasonal occupancy scenario. On US 19 (which is actually the controlling bottleneck for Taylor County evacuations), the additional units will utilize up to 16.9 percent (306 vehicles divided by 1,810 vehicles per hour) of the current LOS E hourly directional maximum service volume for a Category 3-5 hurricane with a high seasonal occupancy scenario. These calculations show that the project will not have a material adverse effect on evacuation clearance time under the State's previous statutory rules and benchmarks.

**TABLE 11  
DIRECTIONAL SERVICE VOLUME CALCULATION**

	Category 3 - Low Occupancy	Category 3 - Low Occupancy	Category 3 - High Occupancy	Category 3 - High Occupancy
	361	US 19 into Perry	361	US 19 into Perry
Percent of Sweetwater Evacuation Traffic Using 361 Keaton Bch RD	100%		100%	
Percent of Sweetwater Evacuation Traffic Using US 19 into Perry		100%		100%
Evacuation Vehicles Over Entire Evacuation	379 vehicles	379 vehicles	1,022 vehicles	1,022 vehicles
Highest Hourly Contribution of Evacuation Traffic as a % of Total Evacuation Traffic Based On Medium Behavioral Response curve	30%	30%	30%	30%
Highest Hourly Contribution of Sweetwater Evacuation Traffic by Route From Project	114 vehicles	114 vehicles	306 vehicles	306 vehicles
Maximum Directional LOS E Service Volume by Route	1,410 vehicles per hour	1,810 vehicles per hour	1,410 vehicles per hour	1,810 vehicles per hour

	Category 3 - Low Occupancy	Category 3 - Low Occupancy	Category 3 - High Occupancy	Category 3 - High Occupancy
	361	US 19 into Perry	361	US 19 into Perry
Max Hourly Evacuation Vehicles as % of LOS E Hourly Directional Service Volume	8.10%	6.30%	21.70%	16.90%

Source: PBS&J (January 2010)

### Shelter Space

Given the predominant seasonal character of the development and its residents, the additional public shelter demand generated should be minimal. Most residents will seek inland hotels and motels or will not even be present at the start of an official evacuation advisory. To calculate a shelter demand figure, it was assumed that five percent of the permanent resident evacuees and one percent of the seasonal resident evacuees would go to local public shelter. This generates an additional net maximum of 32 public shelter evacuees that the county would need to accommodate for a Category 3-5 hurricane, high seasonal occupancy scenario.

### State Review Criteria

To be responsive to the intent of the Chapter 163.3178 State legislation and 9J5 regarding review of development hurricane evacuation impacts, PBS&J also identified the nearest public shelter and analyzed the longest amount of time any one public shelter evacuee might experience traveling there from the Sweetwater site (Appendix F which includes the model has a sheet that calculates this parameter). For a conservative calculation, the nearest public shelter was assumed to be Taylor County High School on the northwest side of Perry. Its current public sheltering capacity is 750 people and should be able to adequately handle the additional demand when combined with four other shelters that may be opened. Total Taylor County shelter space is 2,510 people. Looking at the worst congestion that will be experienced at any time during an evacuation in this area of Taylor County, public shelter evacuees from Sweetwater will experience no more than 92 to 146 minutes of travel time to this shelter for the benchmark Category 3 scenario. That compares very favorable to the 12 hour criteria set by the State in Florida Statutes Chapter 163.3178. This calculation takes into account other evacuation zonal traffic in the area and background traffic that will be on the network.

The current coastal element (section 1X.7) of the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan specifies a maximum clearance time limit of 9 hours for a Category 1 hurricane and 22 hours for a Category 5 hurricane. Taylor County, even with maximum expected traffic from the Withlacoochee area to its south and a build out of the Sweetwater Community, has a clearance time of only 5.0 hours in a Category 1 hurricane and 9.2 hours in a Category 5 hurricane with high tourist occupancy. Much of this time is built in behavioral response time and not even actual traffic demand servicing time. These times are much lower than the county's standard of 9 and 22 hours for a minor and major hurricane.

## Conclusions

The analysis demonstrates that the project will have minimal impacts on clearance time and public sheltering in Taylor County. This part of Taylor County and Florida has relatively light roadway evacuation congestion and the Sweetwater development does little to negatively change that situation. Please see the Hurricane Evacuation Impact Analysis, in Appendix F, for further details.

## **G. Recreation and Open Space**

The 2009 Taylor County Comprehensive Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) indicates no apparent deficiencies in maintaining overall adopted levels of service for recreation and open space. The EAR also stated that there are no projected needs or deficiencies for County recreational resources through 2035.

The passive recreation opportunities available at The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary include: Over four miles of kayak/canoe paddling trails with close proximity and easy access to The Historic Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail; Kayak/canoe and pedestrian access to Sweetwater Creek; Bird Watching; approximately 2.45 miles of scenic nature trails, boardwalks and cart paths; an elevated boardwalk and educational plaques providing information about natural ecology and archeological and cultural resources of the area; and a boardwalk connecting the town center to the golf course. Passive recreational amenities at the Reserve will provide access to expanses of relatively undisturbed saltmarsh and forested wetlands. Visitors will be able to explore these natural areas along elevated boardwalks and designated cart/foot paths, please refer to Figure 10 *Passive Recreation*. Scenic overlooks will provide views of the saltmarsh and Gulf of Mexico. Bird watchers will be able to study a diversity of wading birds and estuarine species in their native habitat. Paddlers can access Sweetwater Creek with canoes/kayaks via a boardwalk and launch from a recreation area in Node C. Canoe/Kayakers can paddle upstream through forested wetlands or downstream through saltmarsh to the Gulf of Mexico. Interested travelers can connect with the Historic Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail, Florida's first legislatively designated water trail.

The proposed amendment area includes the golf course sub-area which consists of approximately 147 acres of open space. The golf course is an important amenity of the proposed development and will be connected directly to the town center with a boardwalk. The golf course will include the following features: 72 par/18 hole course, Clubhouse, Pro-Shop, Driving Range and Practice Facilities. The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary's golf course features a championship design that enables the inexperienced player to gain a memorable, enjoyable experience, while challenging the more seasoned golfer with the excitement of novel bunkering and golfing-carries over challenging water features. The course setting is designed to challenge players of all skill levels. The proposed plan establishes a "links-style" course that evokes the feeling of playing the classic old golf courses in Ireland or Scotland. The golf course has been carefully designed to utilize the uplands areas and previously disturbed areas while incorporating the surrounding natural resources. Minimizing impacts to wetlands has been a major focus of the design effort. Additionally, the owner has committed to working with Audubon International for the development of resource management plans

for long term protection of the environment and surrounding natural areas. The proposed course site will allow the golfer to experience natural vegetation and water views including natural forested wetlands and upland intertwined with vistas of the Gulf of Mexico and saltmarshes. The course will face both the Gulf of Mexico and the woodlands and will be linked with the natural upland area east of the CR 361 along the eastern boundary of the property.

Furthermore, a total of 1,017 acres will be preserved as conservation area which allows passive recreation including boardwalks and park areas, fishing, silvicultural uses subject to Best Management Practices, water resources utilization, and preservation/conservation. The 147-acre golf course with a clubhouse and supporting infrastructure will also serve as functional recreation space within the development. In summary, approximately 90 percent of the proposed amendment site will remain as functional recreation and open space.

**H. Schools**

The proposed development will include 624 resort style multi-family residential units. For analysis purposes it has been estimated that approximately 80 percent of the residential units or 499 units will be seasonally occupied and 20 percent or 125 units will be occupied by permanent residents. Therefore, based on the number of units occupied by permanent residents, the proposed development will generate 38 school aged children. The amendment site is serviced by Taylor County Elementary School, Taylor County Middle School, and Taylor County High School. Of the total students generated by the project, approximately 6 are expected to be in the Elementary School bracket, 5 are expected to be in the Middle School bracket, and 27 are expected to be in the High School bracket.

Beginning in the 2008-2009 school year, Taylor County's LOS standard for schools will become effective. The Elementary, Middle, and High School LOS standard will be 100 percent of permanent Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) capacity. Using the FISH capacities from the Florida Department of Education Capital Outlay Full Time Equivalency Forecasts (2007) used to project enrollments in the Public School Facilities Element, the Taylor County School District will have excess capacity to meet the needs of the proposed comprehensive plan amendment. Table 12 provides the capacity of the Taylor County School District through the long term planning period ending in 2016-2017.

**TABLE 12  
TAYLOR COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT CAPACITY**

	<b>FISH Capacity</b>	<b>2016-2017 Expected Enrollment</b>	<b>Estimated School Age Population</b>	<b>Excess Capacity</b>
<b>Elementary School</b>	1,938	1,510	6	422
<b>Middle School</b>	881	608	5	268
<b>High School</b>	778	641	27	110

*Source: WilsonMiller, Inc (December 2008) and Florida Department of Education Capital Outlay Full Time Equivalency Forecasts, 2007*

## VIII. URBAN SPRAWL ANALYSIS

Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g), F.A.C., provides a 13 point list of indicators to help in the evaluation of whether a proposed land use change would constitute urban sprawl. An analysis of the 13 points as applied to the proposed text and Future Land Use Map amendment follows:

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)1: Promotes, allows or designates for development of substantial areas of the jurisdiction to develop as low-intensity, low density, or single-use development or uses in excess of demonstrated need.**

*The proposed amendment does not promote, allow, or designate for development of substantial areas of the jurisdiction to develop as low-intensity, low density, or single-use development or uses in excess of demonstrated need. The proposed amendment allows for a compact, integrated mixed-use resort community including an interconnected development area where residential, commercial, hotel, civic/public uses, roads, trails, boardwalks, kayak launching facility, golf course, and supporting infrastructure will occur. The development provides a unique niche opportunity for the Taylor County economy and yet remains below the maximum development potential for allowable uses on the Adopted Future Land Use Map. For additional information on the development potential analysis, please refer to Section VII, Table 9.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)2: Promotes, allows or designates significant amounts of urban development to occur in rural areas at substantial distances from existing urban areas while leaping over undeveloped lands which are available and suitable for development.**

*The proposed amendment does not promote, allow, or designate significant amounts of urban development to occur in rural areas at substantial distances from existing urban areas while leaping over undeveloped lands which are available and suitable for development. The proposed amendment site is bounded on the west by the urbanized community of Dekle Beach, and is bounded to the south by the urbanized community of Keaton Beach. Also surrounding the proposed amendment site are the smaller communities of Ezell Beach and Gibson Road to the south and Oak Ridge Estates, Keaton Beach Ridge, and Deerwood at the Beaches to the east. Situated between these urbanized beach communities, the proposed amendment site will provide for infill development.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)3: Promotes, allows or designates urban development in radial, strip, isolated or ribbon patterns generally emanating from existing urban development.**

*The proposed amendment does not promote, allow, or designate urban development in radial, strip, isolated or ribbon patterns generally emanating from existing urban development. The proposed amendment site is located just east of the Dekle Beach community (across Dekle Beach Road), north of the Keaton Beach community and west of Oak Ridge Estates. The proposed land use will ultimately allow a master-planned resort community with a functionally integrated mixture of land uses adjacent to these urbanized beach communities.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)4:** As a result of premature or poorly planned conversion of rural land or other uses, fails to adequately protect and conserve natural resources, such as wetlands, floodplains, native vegetation, environmentally sensitive areas, natural groundwater aquifer recharge areas, lakes, rivers, shorelines, beaches, bays, estuarine systems, and other significant natural systems.

*The proposed amendment allows a mixed-use resort community while focusing on the reduction of VMT, preservation of natural open spaces, sensitive lands, and area character through the use of provisions that will maximize the preservation of conservation areas, as well as encourage creative design by clustering development onto uplands surrounded by natural open spaces and increasing connectivity. This mixed-use resort community contains approximately 1,017 acres of conservation areas. Therefore, almost eighty percent of the Sweetwater Resort Community land use category will consist of conservation areas.*

*Furthermore, extensive efforts have been undertaken to avoid and minimize wetland impacts while maintaining an economically viable nature-based resort development. No impacts to marine resources or seagrasses are proposed. Direct impacts to freshwater wetlands from the proposed development are approximately 25.74 acres. No saltmarsh impacts are proposed. Mitigation to offset proposed wetland impacts will be provided using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

*Finally, the proposed resort development will be served by an on-site stormwater/drainage management system designed so that there will be no increase in outflow to adjacent property as a result of the proposed development, as required by the County development standards. It will also be designed to protect adjacent waterways by utilization of best management practices and other innovative techniques. Stormwater runoff will be treated by proposed wet detention stormwater management systems and will meet water quality standards required by the SRWMD and FDEP for OFW. The required amount of treated runoff discharging to an OFW will be the volume of rainfall from the first 1.5 inches over the drainage area. The runoff, once treated by the proposed wet detention stormwater management systems, will meet criteria required by SRWMD and FDEP rules. The quality of the treated stormwater will meet state standards, thereby not adversely impacting offsite waters.*

*In addition, the golf course will obtain and maintain the designation at the Silver Level in the Audubon International Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Program in order to achieve heightened water quality and conservation benefits. The Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program application for The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary has been approved for review at the Bronze Level; however, application for Silver Level will be submitted. Please refer to Appendix H for a copy of correspondence with Audubon International.*

*Sediment and erosion control measures, and best management practices will also be utilized during construction to prohibit downstream deposition of sediment and particulates.*

*Therefore, the proposed amendment will adequately protect and conserve natural resources, such as wetlands, floodplains, native vegetation, environmentally sensitive areas, natural groundwater aquifer recharge areas, lakes, rivers, shorelines, beaches, bays, estuarine systems, and other significant natural systems.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)5: Fails adequately to protect adjacent agricultural areas and activities, including silviculture, and including active agricultural and silvicultural activities as well as passive agricultural activities and dormant, unique and prime farmlands and soils.**

*Clustering site development will result in the preservation of large tracts of open space that will enable the area to maintain its rural character and to keep development internal to the project area. The majority of the proposed development that abuts adjacent properties will be conservation leaving development areas internal to the site.*

*This conservation area contains 1,017 acres that could act as buffers to the adjacent agriculture lands or with the implementation of Best Management Practices, be utilized for silviculture activities outside of the salt marsh wetlands. Therefore, by clustering and arranging density in a manner to achieve large expanses of open space with significant buffers and by setting aside nearly 80 percent of the site for conservation, the proposed amendments do not fail to adequately protect adjacent agricultural areas and activities, including silviculture.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)6: Fails to maximize use of existing public facilities and services.**

*The proposed amendment site is undeveloped and currently a centralized potable water and sanitary sewer system are not available to serve the site. The proposed development will coordinate with Taylor County to construct both a centralized sanitary sewer system and potable water system and transmission facilities. Additionally the site will continue to utilize the existing services provided by the County such as the roadway network, emergency services and recreation facilities like the Keaton Beach boat ramp. By developing the proposed amendment site, the existing transportation network and other public facilities and services provided by Taylor County will be more fully utilized.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)7: Fails to maximize use of future public facilities and services.**

*The proposed amendment site has been designed to maximize the future public facilities and services provided by the County and proposed by the developer. The mixed use design of the project allows for the integration of multiple modes of transportation and increased interconnectivity thereby utilizing highways, roads, trails, and paths in various ways. Additionally, by clustering the development around a mixed-use area, the public facilities can be adequately planned and strategically located to best service the proposed development. Services provided by the County can be more efficiently routed to the residents due to the compact development area.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)8: Allows for land use patterns or timing which disproportionately increase the cost in time, money, and energy of providing and maintaining facilities and services, including roads, potable water, sanitary sewer,**

**stormwater management, law enforcement, education, health care, fire and emergency response, and general government.**

*The proposed amendment will not allow for a disproportionate increase in the cost in time, money, and energy of providing and maintaining all other facilities and services. The developer has agreed to construct a centralized potable water system, a centralized sanitary sewer system, and an onsite stormwater management system to serve the proposed development. These systems will ultimately be maintained by the developer, homeowners or condominium or property owners association, or a Community Development District. All other governmental services that are available to the Dekle Beach and Keaton Beach communities will also be available to the proposed amendment site, as it is located just east of the Dekle Beach community (across Dekle Beach Road), and north of the Keaton Beach community. Thus there is no disproportionate increase in costs to provide these services.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)9: Fails to provide clear separation between rural and urban uses.**

*The development of the proposed amendment area will provide a clear separation between rural and urban uses. The proposed amendment site is bounded on the west by the urbanized community of Dekle Beach, and is bounded to the south by the urbanized community of Keaton Beach. The smaller neighborhoods of Oak Ridges Estates, Gibson Road, and Ezell Beach also surround the proposed amendment site. The continuous urban designation will provide a clear separation between these urban uses and the rural land uses designated to the north and east.*

*The proposed development has conservation areas planned to abut the rural lands to the north and east. Additionally, the conservation lands planned for the areas adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico will provide a buffer to protect the existing marsh. Overall, the proposed development will provide a clear separation between rural and urban uses.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)10: Discourages or inhibits infill development or the redevelopment of existing neighborhoods and communities.**

*The proposed amendment site is located just east of the Dekle Beach community (across Dekle Beach Road) and north of the Keaton Beach community. Also surrounding the proposed amendment site are the smaller communities of Ezell Beach and Gibson Road to the south and Oakridge Estates and Deerwood Beach to the east. The proposed amendment will provide a mix of coastal resort uses not planned or available in existing neighborhoods and communities. The proposed amendment will not discourage or inhibit infill development or redevelopment of the existing neighborhoods and communities.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)11: Fails to encourage an attractive and functional mix of uses.**

*The proposed text amendment allows a compact, interconnected mixed-use resort community with an attractive, functional, and integrated mix of uses. The resort community will be comprised of three sub-areas, including: (1) development areas where residential, commercial, hotel, civic/public uses, roads, trails, boardwalks, kayak launching facility, and supporting infrastructure will occur; (2) a golf course area, consisting of an 18-hole golf course, clubhouse and supporting infrastructure; and (3)*

conservation areas which allow fishing, passive recreation including boardwalks and park areas, silvicultural uses subject to Best Management Practices, water resources utilization, and preservation/conservation. It offers an opportunity to live, work, and play all within a functional, multi-modal community.

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)12: Results in poor accessibility among linked or related land uses.**

*The proposed mixed-use resort community will be designed for connectivity between a mixture of functionally integrated land uses in order to promote a pedestrian/biking/golf cart transportation network. Visitors will be able to explore the proposed amendment site's large expanse of natural areas along approximately 2.45 miles of interconnected scenic nature trails, boardwalks, and cart paths. Visitors will also be able to easily walk from their hotel to a commercial center. Approximately 85 – 90 percent of the hotel rooms and residential areas are within a 0.25 mile walk and all units are within an approximate 0.33 mile walk.*

*In addition to these multimodal approaches, the proposed resort community will include access management controls and internal roadway systems to efficiently service the mixture of land uses and help maintain the capacity of existing and future roadways. Finally, the proposed community will be readily accessible to the adjacent Dekle Beach and Keaton Beach communities via pre-existing CR 361.*

**Rule 9J-5.006(5)(g)13: Results in loss of significant amounts of functional open space.**

*The proposed amendments will ensure that development and related recreational activities are conducted in an environmentally sensitive manner that is compatible with the rural character of Taylor County. Development of the proposed amendment site will be clustered on the uplands, away from environmentally sensitive areas. A total of approximately 1,017 acres of the proposed amendment site will be placed in conservation.*

*The proposed amendment area also includes a golf course sub-area which consists of approximately 147 acres of open space. The golf course is an important amenity of the proposed development and will be connected directly to the town center with a boardwalk. The golf course will include the following features: 72 par/18 hole course, Clubhouse, Pro-Shop, Driving Range and Practice Facilities. The golf course has been carefully designed to utilize the uplands areas and previously disturbed areas while incorporating the surrounding natural resources. Minimizing impacts to wetlands has been a major focus of the design effort. Additionally, the owner has committed to working with Audubon International for the development of resource management plans for long term protection of the environment and surrounding natural areas.*

*In total, approximately 90 percent of the property will continue to provide functional open space. Therefore, the development of the proposed amendment site will not result in the loss of significant amounts of functional open space.*

## IX. CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

The proposed text and Future Land Use Map amendment is consistent with the Future Land Use Element, other affected elements of the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan (as required by Rule 9J-11.006(1)(b)5, F.A.C.). This section of the application provides a specific description of how the proposed text and Future Land Use Map amendments are consistent with the significant subject areas of land use, natural resources, and public facilities and services of the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan.

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.1.3: The County shall designate land uses for residential, commercial, industrial, public and recreation to meet the needs of the existing and projected future populations.**

**And**

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.1.4: The County shall base the designation of residential, commercial and industrial lands depicted on the Future Land Use Plan Map upon acreage which can be reasonably expected to develop by the year 2015 based upon: (1) Best available population data; and (2) Best available housing need data.**

*The proposed development does not exceed the amount of development designated by Taylor County on the Future Land Use Map. The property is designated as Agriculture/Rural Residential and Mixed Use – Urban Development by the adopted Future Land Use Map which allows for up to 879 residential dwelling units and 614,650 sq. ft. of non-residential uses. The amendment proposes only 624 dwelling units, 150,000 sq. ft. of retail/office, and an approximately 325,000 sq. ft. of hotel space. This leaves a surplus of 255 residential dwelling units and 15,050 sq. ft. of non-residential space.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.1.6: The County shall regulate future urban development in conformance with topography and soil conditions, and within areas that will be served by public facilities and services to establish LOS standards.**

*The proposed amendment area will be served by central water and sewer and will meet the LOS standards set forth in the Taylor County Comprehensive Plan. The Sweetwater Resort Community land use designation is suitable for the type and amount of development proposed, as it is situated between the urban communities of Dekle Beach and Keaton Beach. It is also suitable in regards to the soils, natural resources and historic resources of the land, as demonstrated by data and analysis included within Section VI of this application.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.4.1: The County shall restrict development within unsuitable areas due to flooding, improper drainage, steep slopes, rock formations and adverse earth formations, unless acceptable methods are formulated by the developer and approved by the County to solve the problems created by the unsuitable land conditions.**

*The proposed amendment area does not contain any steep slopes, rock formations or adverse earth formations. The proposed amendment will restrict development in the flood prone areas by reducing the amount of development to less than what is currently allowed under the adopted future land use designation. Furthermore, the development of the proposed amendment area will be elevated consistent with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and County standards to address flooding and poor drainage. In addition, a substantial stormwater system will be developed to mitigate flooding and drainage issues.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.5.1:** The County shall continue to maintain procedures for the review of proposed development to determine its impact on level of service standards for public facilities and shall require that level of service standards be met concurrently with the impact of development.

*The proposed amendment area will not result in an adverse impact to the adopted LOS standard for any public facilities at the time of impact from development of the site, as demonstrated by data and analysis included within Section VII of this application.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.6.2:** The County shall include provisions for adequate drainage, stormwater management, open space and convenient on site traffic flow for all development.

*The development of the proposed amendment area will be in accordance with all applicable requirements concerning drainage, stormwater management, open space, and traffic flow, as demonstrated by data and analysis included within Section VII of this application.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.6.4:** The County shall participate in the National Flood Insurance Program, and shall regulate development and the installation of utilities in flood hazard areas in conformance with requirements of the program.

*The development of the proposed amendment area, including the placement of any utilities, will be in compliance with all regulatory agency and permitting guidelines including the National Flood Insurance Program.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.6.5:** The County shall require that new development, or other newly permitted land uses, shall be compatible with previously existing land uses or shall provide appropriate buffers to protect existing land uses from adverse impacts of the new development.

*The development of the proposed amendment area will be compatible with the existing and future land uses surrounding the site. The proposed amendment site is bounded on the west by the urbanized community of Dekle Beach, and is bounded to the south by the urbanized community of Keaton Beach. The smaller neighborhoods of Oak Ridges Estates, Gibson Road, and Ezell Beach also surround the proposed amendment site. Adjacent to the proposed golf course is the Deerwood at the Beaches community. The golf course will be designed to provide a serene amenity and recreation area for both the residents of the development and the adjacent subdivisions. Situated between these urbanized beach communities, the proposed amendment site will provide for infill development between Dekle Beach and Keaton Beach.*

*The proposed amendment site is adjacent to rural agriculture lands on the north side and a portion of the east side. The proposed development has conservation areas planned to abut the rural lands in order to ensure compatibility with the existing land uses. Additionally, the conservation lands planned for the areas adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico will provide a buffer to protect the existing marsh. The area on the east side abutting Mixed Use – Rural Residential is proposed as a town center. This will provide a mix of retail, office, and residential uses adjacent to the higher intensity mixed use areas. Overall, the proposed development will provide compatible uses for the adjacent, existing development.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.8.1: Vacant or unimproved lots or parcels which are non-conforming as to size for residential use for single family, duplex, or triplex units only, and which can individually be identified and described from documents recorded in the Public Records of Taylor County, Florida, on June 29, 1990, the date of adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, shall continue to be eligible for the issuance of residential building permits, subject to all other provisions of the plan, including setbacks and concurrency.**

*No non-conforming residential lots or parcels, which are non-conforming due to size or shape for residential uses, exist on the proposed amendment area.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.9.1: The County shall maintain a listing of all known prehistoric and historic sites having particular significance to the history of the County, State or Nation, whose locations have been documented and can be physically located within the unincorporated area of the County. This list shall be based on the Florida Master Site File developed and maintained by the Florida Department of State and updated as new documented information regarding the prehistoric or historic significance of a site is identified and provided to the County.**

**And**

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.9.2: The County shall maintain criteria for designated historic structures and sites and further, establish guidelines for the maintenance and adaptive reuse of historic structures and sites.**

- (a) The effect of the proposed work on the landmark or the property upon which such work is to be done
- (b) The relationship between such work and other structures on the historic sites;
- (c) The extent to which the historic architectural significance, architectural style, design, arrangement, texture, materials and color of the historic housing will be affected; and
- (d) Whether the denial of a certificate would deprive the property owner of reasonable beneficial use of his or her property.

*A search of the FMSF found no previously recorded cultural resources within one mile of the proposed amendment area. However, Janus Research located one archaeological site (8TA387) and the remnants of a Civil War Salt Works site (8TA401) within the proposed amendment area. Consequently, an Avoidance and Treatment Plan has been developed by Janus Research for the proposed amendment area in order to preserve*

Site 8TA401 and treat Site 8TA387. The plan was developed in conjunction with recommendations from the SHPO and is written in accordance with Chapter 267 Florida Statutes, Florida Historical Resources Act, as implemented through Chapter 1A-46 Florida Administration Code. The avoidance and treatment plan for sites 8TA401 and 8TA387 was approved in a letter signed by Frederick Gaske, SHPO and Director Florida Division of Historic Resources on November 14, 2007. The proposed project has been planned completely around the Salt Works, so as not to impact any of the five (5) areas in Site 8TA401. Impacts to site 8TA387 will be avoided and/or minimized by design, with unavoidable impacts to be mitigated. Please refer to Appendix B for copies of all cultural resources correspondence.

**Future Land Use Element Objective I.10: The County shall continue to protect natural resources and environmentally sensitive lands.**

*Extensive efforts have been taken to ensure that significant natural resource and environmentally sensitive lands are protected. These efforts include the following: prohibition of motorized vessels, treatment of stormwater to heightened water quality standards for an OFW, committing to certify the golf course at the Silver Level in the Audubon International Signature Sanctuary program, preserving on-site wetlands, and placing 1,017 acres of land in the conservation sub-area.*

*Motorized watercraft access will be prohibited from the proposed amendment area. Additionally, the stormwater treatment system will meet the heightened State water quality standards for OFW and will meet the water quality criteria required by the SRWMD and FDEP regulations. The quality of treated stormwater will meet State standards thereby not adversely impacting coastal marsh and tidal swamp areas. The on-site golf course and associated structures will employ a Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) designed by Audubon International. Following this NRMP will qualify the amendment area for the Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program, which recognizes areas that are designed and maintained with sustainable resource management practices for the long-term stewardship of the property. Such practices include reduced turf grass use and increased native plant utilization, non-chemical alternative methods of pest control, and effluent water use.*

*Of the 1,057 acres of wetlands located within the proposed amendment area, less than three percent will be directly impacted. Where impacts to wetlands are unavoidable, mitigation will be provided using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

*Large portions of the proposed amendment area, approximately 1,017 acres, shall be preserved as conservation. The conservation sub-area includes such environmentally sensitive areas as saltmarsh and freshwater forested wetlands. The natural functions of the 100 year floodplain will be maintained due to the proposed amendment area's proximity to the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico serves as an infinite sink and proposed development activities will not alter the 100 year floodplain.*

*For additional information see the consistency analysis responses below to the Policies under this Objective.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.10.1:** The County shall continue to protect community potable water supply wells by restricting uses within the 300 foot area designed by this Comprehensive Plan to those that do not handle hazardous materials of any type or have the potential to harm the water supply in accordance with Chapters 62-521 and 62-555, Florida Administrative Code in effect on January 1, 2003. All new wellfield protection areas shall be controlled by the owner of the community water system, either by conservation easement or in fee simple ownership. In addition, no transportation or storage of such regulated materials shall be allowed in the wellfield protection area, as defined by Chapter 62-730, Florida Administrative Code in effect January 1, 2003 and Code of Florida Regulations, Title 40, Part 302 and 355, and Title 49, Part 172 in effect on January 1, 2003 except local traffic serving facilities within the wellfield protection area.

*The proposed amendment area is not located within an area designated as a wellfield protection area for the purpose of protecting local community potable water supply wells from adverse land uses.*

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.10.2:** The County shall continue to allow mitigation of the adverse effects of land uses on environmentally sensitive areas. The County shall require all new development to maintain the natural functions of environmentally sensitive areas, including but not limited to wetlands and 100-year floodplains so that the long term environmental integrity, and economic and recreational value of these areas is maintained.

**And**

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.10.3:** As part of the County's development review process, environmentally sensitive land shall be identified for protection. These environmentally sensitive lands shall include, but not be limited to, wetlands, flood-prone areas, and areas designated as prime high groundwater aquifer recharge areas. Where the alternative of clustering all structures on the non-wetland portion of the site exists, the County shall provide for the conservation of wetlands by prohibiting development which alters the natural function of wetlands. Mitigation efforts shall be required for activities which alter the natural function of wetlands in accordance with Chapter 40B-400, Florida Administrative Code in effect January 1, 2005. Such mitigation efforts shall result in no net loss of wetland functions and all restored or created wetlands shall be of the same ecological type, nature, and function.

**And**

**Future Land Use Element Policy I.10.4:** Where the alternative of clustering all structures on the non-wetland portion of a site does not exist, the County shall allow only minimal residential development activity in those areas defined as wetlands within this Comprehensive Plan and such development activity shall conform to the density requirement for the land use classification applicable to the location of the wetland. However, in no case shall residential dwelling unit density be greater than 1 dwelling unit per 40 acres. In addition, such development activity shall comply with the following densities and performance standards:

- (a) Residences and any support buildings shall be elevated no lower than 1 foot above the highest recorded flood level in the wetland. If flooding data is not available, residences and any support buildings shall be built at least 2 feet above the highest seasonal water level;
- (b) Clearing or removal of native vegetation shall not exceed ½ acre per 5 acres. Exotic vegetation may be removed without regard to this limitation provided that, if the area cleared of exotic vegetation exceeds the applicable ½ acre limitation, it is replanted with native wetland vegetation; and
- (c) Walking paths and driveways to the residence shall use permeable fill and shall be constructed with a sufficient number and size of culverts to allow the natural flow of water to continue.

*Development of the proposed amendment area will primarily be clustered on approximately 127 acres of upland areas in order to minimize the impacts on wetlands; and will be designed in accordance with FEMA flood elevations and applicable Taylor County building codes. Of the 1,057 acres of wetlands located within the proposed amendment area, less than three percent will be directly impacted. Where impacts to wetlands are unavoidable, mitigation will be provided using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

*Large portions of the proposed amendment area, approximately 1,017 acres, shall be preserved as conservation. The conservation sub-area includes such environmentally sensitive areas as saltmarsh and freshwater forested wetlands. The natural functions of the 100 year floodplain will be maintained due to the proposed amendment area's proximity to the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico serves as an infinite sink and proposed development activities will not alter the 100 year floodplain.*

**Traffic Circulation Element Policy II.1.1: Establish the Service Standards as noted below at peak hour for the following roadway segments within the County as defined within the Florida Department of Transportation 2002 Quality/Level of Service Handbook.**

*Taylor County's adopted LOS standard as laid out in the Comprehensive Plan will be maintained for the daily and PM peak hour traffic generated by the proposed development, as demonstrated by data and analysis included within Section VII and Appendix E of this application.*

**Traffic Circulation Element Policy II.1.2: The County shall continue to control the number and frequency of connections and access points of driveways and roads to arterial and collector roads to be in conformance with Chapter 14-96 and 14-97, Florida Administrative Code, in effect on January 1, 2003 and the following requirements for County roads.**

1. Permitting 1 access point for ingress and egress purposes to a single property or development;
2. Permitting 2 access points if the minimum distance between the 2 access points exceeds 20 feet;
3. Permitting 3 access points if the minimum distance between each access point is at least 100 feet; or

**4. Permitting more than 3 access points where a minimum distance of 1,000 feet is maintained between each access point.**

*The Applicant will comply with all requirements concerning the number and frequency of connections and access points of driveways and roads to arterial and collector roads.*

**Traffic Circulation Element Policy II.1.3:** The County shall require the provision of safe and convenient on-site traffic flow, which includes the provision for vehicle parking consistent, which shall be located on the same lot or parcel of land the parking is intended to serve. Each off-street parking space, with the exception of handicapped parking spaces, shall be a minimum of 10 feet by 20 feet in size. Each handicapped parking space shall be a minimum of 12 feet by 20 feet in size, plus a 5 foot wide access aisle. The County may allow the establishment of such off-street parking facilities within 300 feet of the premises they are intended to service when the practical difficulties prevent the placing of facilities on the same lot as the premises they are designed to serve.

*Safe and convenient on-site traffic flow, including automotive parking consistent with the provisions provided in the Traffic Circulation Element, will be provided for the site in accordance with all applicable requirements.*

**Traffic Circulation Element Policy II.4.1:** The County shall continue to require all new structures along new or realigned collector or arterial roadways to provide an additional setback of 75 feet as measured from the centerline of the right-of-way for the future need of additional right-of-way. Such additional right-of-way shall be provided by the developer of the land as part of the development review process or shall be purchased by the agency improving the roadway.

*No encroachments are anticipated to occur; however, the Applicant will comply with all requirements concerning right-of-way setbacks to prevent any potential encroachment along the right-of-way of County Road 361.*

**Housing Element Policy III.6.1:** The County shall continue to enforce provisions which protect significant historic housing through maintenance requirements and, where appropriate, adaptive reuse.

*The proposed amendment area consists of unimproved land with no historic housing structures occurring on site.*

**Sanitary Sewer Facility Sub Element Policy IV. 2.1:** The County hereby establishes the following level of service standards for sanitary sewer facilities:

<b><u>FACILITY TYPE</u></b>	<b><u>LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD</u></b>
Private On-site disposal	Shall meet or exceed all the requirements set by 64E-6, Florida Administrative Code, in effect January 2003
New Central Facilities	
residential uses	100 gals./capita/day

nonresidential uses

Minimum service shall be consistent with 64E-6, Florida Administrative Code, in effect January 2003

And

**Sanitary Sewer Facility Sub Element Policy IV. 2.2:** The County shall prohibit the installation of septic tanks in locations with unsuitable soils or within wetland areas. The issuance of septic tanks permits shall be a function of the Department of Health or other governmental agency having jurisdiction, subject to current regulations.

*The development of the proposed amendment area will not utilize septic tanks but rather will be served by central wastewater collection systems. The onsite facility proposed by the developer will meet or exceed all LOS standards required by Taylor County.*

**Solid Waste Facility Sub Element Policy IV. 3.1:** The County hereby establishes the following level of service standards for solid waste disposal facilities:

**FACILITY TYPE**

**LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD**

**Solid Waste Landfill**

**0.78 ton per capita per year**

*At maximum build-out the development will result in a projected average daily volume solid waste increase of approximately 4.8 tons per day. The additional solid waste generated by the proposed development will be accepted by the Aucilla Area Solid Waste Facility and will meet the 0.78 tons per capita per year LOS standard for solid waste adopted by Taylor County.*

*Solid waste generated by the proposed development will not have a significant impact on the Aucilla facility, as it only represents less than a 4 percent increase in the amount of solid waste on a daily basis. There will be negligible effect on the capacity of the Aucilla Area Solid Waste Facility by waste generated from the subject development.*

**Drainage Facility Sub Element Policy IV. Policy 4.1: Level of Service Standard**

For all projects not exempted from Chapter 40B-4 and 62-25, Florida Administrative Code in effect on January 1, 2003 within the County, stormwater management systems must be installed such that the peak rate of post-development runoff will not exceed the peak-rate of predevelopment runoff for the storm events up through and including either one of the following design storms.

1. A design storm with a 10-year, 24-hour rainfall depth with Natural Resource Conservation Service Type II distribution falling on average antecedent moisture conditions for projects serving exclusively agriculture, forest, conservation or recreational uses; or
2. A design storm with 100-year critical duration rainfall depth for projects serving any land use other than agriculture, silvicultural, or recreational issues.
3. Facilities which directly discharge into an Outstanding Florida Water shall include an additional level of treatment equal to the runoff of the first 1.5 inches of rainfall from the design storm consistent with Chapter 62-25.05(9), Florida Administrative

Code, in effect on January 1, 2003 in order to meet the receiving water quality standards of Chapter 62-302. Florida Administrative code in effect January 1, 2003 Stormwater discharge facilities shall be designed so as not to lower the receiving water quality below the minimum conditions necessary to assure the suitability of water for the designated use of its classification as established in Chapter 62-302. Florida Administrative Code in effect January 1, 2003.

4. All other stormwater management projects shall be required to adhere to the standards for treatment in accordance with Chapter 40-B4, Florida Administrative Code in effect on January 1, 2003 (rules of the Suwannee River Water Management District) and the Suwannee River Water Management District Environmental Resource Permitting Applicant's Handbook, as effective on January 1, 2003. Stormwater discharge facilities shall be designed so as to not lower the receiving water quality or degrade the receiving water body below the minimum conditions necessary to maintain their classifications as established in Chapter 62-302. Florida administrative Code in effect on January 1, 2003.

Any development exempt from Chapter 62-25 or 40B-4, Florida Administrative Code in effect on January 1, 2003, as cited above and which is adjacent to or drain into a surface water, canal, or stream, or which enters a ditch which empties into a sinkhole, shall first allow the runoff to enter a grassed swale or other conveyance designed to percolate 80% of the runoff from a three year, on hour design storm within 72 hours after storm event. In addition, any development exempt from Chapter 62-25 or 40B-4, Florida Administrative Code in effect on January 1, 2003 as cited above, which is directly discharged into an Outstanding Florida Water shall include an additional level of treatment equal to the runoff of the first 1.5 inches of rainfall from the design storm consistent with Chapter 62-25.025(9). Florida Administrative Code in effect on January 1, 2003. Stormwater discharge facilities shall be designed so as not to lower the receiving water quality below the minimum condition necessary to assure the suitability of water for the designated use of its classification as established in Chapter 62-302, Florida Administrative Code in effect January 1, 2003

And

**Drainage Facility Sub Element Policy IV. 4.2:** The County shall include provisions to control development which would significantly impact or interrupt natural drainage flows, including sheet flow and flow to isolated wetland systems, without mitigation. Normal agricultural and silvicultural activities shall be exempted from these regulations, subject to Best Management Practices 2000 as adopted by the Florida Department of Agriculture or Florida Division of Forestry, as appropriate, and also the current regulatory requirements of Chapters 373 and 403, Florida Statutes in effect on January 1, 2003.

*The development of the proposed land use change will not significantly impact or interrupt the natural drainage systems of the site without mitigation and will comply with or exceed all regulatory requirements associated with stormwater management.*

*All stormwater runoff and drainage system improvements within the property will be designed in accordance with SRWMD standards and shall manage and treat stormwater runoff to existing County standards; be constructed or caused to be constructed by the developer; and maintained by the developer, a home/property/condominium owners*

association, or an approved Community Development District. The on-site stormwater/drainage management system will be designed so that there will be no increase in outflow to adjacent property as a result of the development, as required by the County development standards; and also will be designed to protect adjacent waterways by utilization of best management practices and other innovative techniques. Stormwater runoff will be treated by proposed wet detention stormwater management systems and will meet water quality standards required by the SRWMD and FDEP for OFW. The required amount of treated runoff discharging to an OFW will be the volume of rainfall from the first 1.5 inches over the drainage area. The runoff, once treated by the proposed wet detention stormwater management systems, will meet criteria required by SRWMD and FDEP rules. The quality of the treated stormwater will meet State standards, thereby not adversely impacting offsite waters.

**Drainage Facility Sub Element Policy IV. 4.3:** The County shall require that all construction activity undertaken shall incorporate erosion and sediment controls during construction to protect the function of natural drainage features.

*The Applicant for the proposed amendment will implement this policy by providing that erosion and sediment control measures will be undertaken during construction occurring on the site. Sediment and erosion control measures, and best management practices will be utilized during construction to prohibit downstream deposition of sediment and particulates.*

**Potable Water Facility Sub Element Policy IV. 5.1:** The County hereby establishes the following level of service standards for potable water.

<b><u>FACILITY TYPE</u></b>	<b><u>LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD</u></b>
Private individual water wells	Standards as specified in Chapter 62-22, Florida Administrative Code in effect on January 1, 2003
Keaton Beach Community Potable Water System	100 gallons per capita per day
Steinhatchee Community Potable Water System	100 gallons per capita per day
Taylor Beaches Community Potable Water System	100 gallons per capita per day
Other Community Potable Water Systems (Future)	100 gallons per capita per day

*The development of the proposed amendment area will utilize a central potable water system and will maintain the LOS standards adopted by Taylor County. The subject site is served by TCW&SD. According to TCW&SD staff, the current demand on the system is presently near its capacity and does not have adequate capacity for the proposed development. However, new well or wells could be constructed to furnish the additional potable water demand for development of the "Maximum Development Scenario."*

*According to SRWMD there are no indications that projected demand will exceed the available supply for the next 20 years. See SRMWD response letter concerning available potable water capacity, attached in Appendix C. The developer shall construct or cause to be constructed all necessary water service infrastructure to service the development that will maintain the adopted LOS standard.*

**Potable Water Facility Sub Element Policy IV.5.2:** The County shall permit residential densities in excess of 2 dwelling units per acre but less than or equal to 4 dwelling units per acre only within areas served by centralized potable water systems, and residential densities in excess of 4 dwelling units per acre only within areas served by centralized potable water and centralized sanitary sewer systems.

*The development of the proposed amendment area will be served by centralized potable water and centralized sanitary sewer systems.*

**Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Sub Element Policy IV.6.1:** The County shall provide for the limitation of development adjacent to natural drainage features to protect the functions of the feature by requiring a minimum of 35 foot setback from natural features and environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, natural water bodies and streambanks.

*The development of the proposed amendment area shall comply with state permitting requirements, including required mitigation and wetland buffers, in accordance with Chapter 62, F.A.C.*

**Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Sub Element Policy IV. 6.4:** Stormwater management practices shall not include drainage wells and sinkholes for stormwater disposal where recharge is into potable water aquifers.

*No stormwater disposal into drainage wells or sinkholes will occur as part of this development.*

**Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Sub Element Policy IV. 7.2:** The County shall require that all new construction and all remodeling activities utilize fixtures conforming to the following schedule of maximum water usage, consistent with the Water Conservation Act of 1982, thereby conserving potable water resources.

Water Closets, tank type	3.5 gals./flush
Water closets, flushometer or flush valve	3.5 gals./flush
Urinals, tank type	3.5 gals./flush
Urinals, flushometer or flush valve	3.5 gals./flush
Showerheads	3.0 gals./minute
Lavatory and sink faucets	3.0 gals./minute

*All new construction activities within the proposed development will utilize fixtures conforming to the above schedule of maximum water use, consistent with the Florida Water Conservation Act.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.1.1:** The County shall require that all appropriate air quality permits are obtained prior to the issuance of development orders, so that minimum air quality levels established by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection are maintained in the County.

*The development of the proposed amendment area will not require any air quality permits and will not have adverse affects to air quality. Therefore the minimum air quality levels established by FDEP will be maintained in Taylor County.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.2.4 and Conservation Element Policy V.2.15:** The County shall require that, unless impacts are mitigated pursuant to Florida Department of Environmental Protection or other appropriate state agency requirements, a 35-foot natural buffer shall be maintained around all wetlands and prohibit the location of agricultural, residential, commercial and industrial land uses within the buffer areas. Mitigation measures must be acceptable to the Department of Environmental Regulation or other governmental agency having mitigation permit jurisdiction but allow silviculture and resource based recreation activities within buffer areas in accordance with the silviculture policies of the Conservation element of this Comprehensive Plan. Normal agricultural and pine silvicultural activities shall be allowed, subject to Best Management Practices 2000 as adopted by the Florida Department of Agriculture or Florida Division of Forestry, as appropriate, and also subject to the current regulatory requirements of Chapters 373 and 403, Florida Statutes, and the rules, regulations and permitting requirements of the Suwannee River Water Management District and other State or Federal governmental agencies having jurisdiction. Unless further restricted by the County's Land Development Regulations, normal hardwood silvicultural activities shall be allowed subject to Best Management Practices and other regulatory requirements as cited for pine silviculture above.

*The development of the proposed amendment area shall comply with state permitting requirements, including required mitigation and wetland buffers, in accordance with Chapter 62, F.A.C. Wetland impacts will be mitigated; therefore a 35 foot buffer shall not be maintained around all wetlands. Mitigation to offset proposed wetland impacts will be provided using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

*The proposed amendment shall create an approximately 1,017 acre conservation sub-area with limited uses as previously described.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.2.5:** The County shall, through the development review process, require that post-development runoff rates and pollutant loads do not exceed pre-development conditions.

*The proposed amendment area shall include stormwater management systems which will collect and treat the required amount of post development runoff and pollutant loads. The on-site stormwater/drainage management system will be designed so that there will*

*be no increase in outflow to adjacent property as a result of the development. Wet detention is the proposed treatment method. The required amount of treated runoff discharging to an OFW is the volume of rainfall from the first 1.5 inches over the drainage area. The runoff, once treated by the proposed wet detention stormwater management systems will meet criteria required by SRWMD and FDEP rules. The quality of the treated stormwater will meet State standards, thereby not adversely impacting offsite waters.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.2.6: The County shall require all new development to maintain the natural functions of environmentally sensitive areas, including but not limited to wetlands and 100-year floodplains so that the long term environmental integrity and economic and recreational value of these areas is maintained. This will be accomplished through compliance with applicable statutes, rules and regulations of State and Federal Agencies having jurisdiction.**

*The proposed amendment area will maintain the natural functions of environmentally sensitive areas. Where impacts to wetlands and other habitats are unavoidable, loss of function shall be offset by mitigation using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

*Additionally, large portions of the proposed amendment area, approximately 1,017 acres, shall be preserved as a conservation sub-area. The natural functions of the 100 year floodplain will be maintained due to the proposed amendment area's proximity to the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico serves as an infinite sink and proposed development activities will not alter the 100 year floodplain. Therefore, the long term environmental integrity and economic and recreational value of these areas will be maintained.*

*The proposed development plan for the amendment area shall comply with applicable statutes, rules, and regulations of the State and Federal Agencies having jurisdiction including FEMA guidelines. The development of the proposed amendment area shall comply with state permitting requirements in accordance with Chapter 62, F.A.C. The development of the proposed amendment area shall comply with Federal permitting requirements, in accordance with CFR 40 part 230 Section 404(b)(1), Guidelines for Specification of Disposal Sites for Dredged or Fill Material.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.2.7: The County shall require that, unless impacts are mitigated, the conservation of wetlands shall be provided for through prohibiting any development or dredging and filling which would significantly alter their natural functions. Mitigation measures must be acceptable to the Department of Environmental Protection or other governmental agency having mitigation permit jurisdiction. Resource based recreation activities (such as hunting and fishing) shall be allowed. Normal agricultural and pine silvicultural activities shall be allowed, subject to Best Management Practices as adopted by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry, as appropriate, and also subject to the current regulatory requirements of Chapters 373 and 403, Florida Statutes, and the rules, regulations and permitting requirements of the Suwannee River Water Management District and other Federal or State governmental agencies having jurisdiction. Unless further restricted, normal hardwood silvicultural activities shall be allowed subject to**

**Best Management Practices and other regulatory requirements as cited for pine silviculture above.**

**And**

**Conservation Element Policy V.2.8: The County shall provide for the conservation of wetlands through prohibiting any development or dredging and filling, which would significantly alter their natural functions without mitigation. Agricultural and silvicultural activities consistent with Best Management Practices manual developed by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall be allowed.**

*The proposed amendment area will maintain the natural functions of wetlands. Of the 1,057 acres of wetlands located within the proposed amendment area, less than three percent will be directly impacted. Where impacts to wetlands are unavoidable, loss of function shall be offset by mitigation. The development of the proposed amendment area shall comply with state permitting requirements, including required mitigation and wetland buffers, in accordance with Chapter 62, F.A.C.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.2.14: The County shall require a 75-foot regulated natural buffer adjacent to all perennial rivers, streams and creeks and their estuaries located within the significant natural areas identified in the Conservation element of this Comprehensive Plan, and prohibit the location of residential, commercial and industrial (including mining) land uses within the buffer areas. Resource based recreation activities (such as hunting and fishing) shall be allowed, Also beyond seventy-five (75) feet, normal agricultural and silvicultural activities will be allowed, subject to Best Management Practices and all other existing regulations. Normal agricultural and pine silvicultural activities shall be allowed outside the 75-foot regulated natural buffer, subject to Best Management Practices as adopted by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry, as appropriate, and also subject to all other existing regulations. The County has reserved the right to further regulate hardwood silvicultural activities. Agricultural and silvicultural activities are also subject to the current regulatory requirements of Chapters 373 and 403, Florida Statutes, as well as the rules, regulations and permitting requirements of the Suwannee River Water Management District and other Federal or State governmental agencies having jurisdiction. Unless further restricted by the County's land development regulations, normal hardwood silvicultural activities shall be allowed outside the 75-foot regulated natural buffer subject to Best Management Practiced and other regulatory requirements as cited for pine silvicultural above. The County shall govern the land management practices and activities which are allowed within the 75-foot regulated natural buffer. The significant natural areas to which this policy applies are identified and described in the Conservation element of this Comprehensive Plan.**

*Activities are not proposed to occur in any perennial rivers, streams, creeks, and their estuaries located within the significant natural areas identified in the Conservation Element of this Comprehensive Plan nor is development of the proposed amendment area anticipated to result in adverse impacts to the identified areas. The coastal marsh and tidal swamp areas is the only significant natural area located adjacent and in close proximity to the proposed amendment area. Sweetwater Creek is located within the*

proposed amendment area and flows downstream into the adjacent significant natural area. A bridge crossing over Sweetwater Creek is included in the proposed development plan in order to avoid and minimize impacts to this important natural feature. Therefore, a 75 foot buffer shall not apply to all portions of Sweetwater Creek within the proposed amendment area. Also, a boardwalk to a canoe/ kayak launch is proposed so that residents and visitors may access Sweetwater Creek for passive recreation. No other activities are proposed to occur in, on, or over Sweetwater Creek.

**Conservation Element Objective V.3 and implementing policies:** The County shall continue to provide for the conservation, appropriate use and protection of soils.

*The proposed Sweetwater Resort Community land use is suitable in regards to the soils of the proposed amendment area, as demonstrated by the data and analysis provided in Section VI of this application. Proposed development of the amendment site will primarily occur on land containing Leon (non-hydric) soils.*

**Conservation Element Objective V.4:** The County shall conserve and protect soils, native vegetative communities, wildlife, and wildlife habitats from adverse effects, with an emphasis on rare and endangered species. Mineral resources shall be appropriately used, conserved and protected.

*See the consistency analysis responses below to the policies under this Objective.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.4.1:** The County shall require an assessment of the potential adverse effects on rare and endangered species for the following:

1. All development within the 35-foot regulated natural buffer adjacent to all perennial rivers, streams and creeks, and those which are intermittent in nature, but which have a distinct, identifiable stream bed or creek run.
2. All development within the 75-foot regulated natural buffer adjacent to all perennial rivers, streams and creeks located within the significant natural areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan.
3. All development within 35 feet of a wetland or water body other than as described in 1. and 2. above.
4. Plan amendments which increase density or intensity of development in the Agricultural 1, Agricultural 2, Agricultural/Rural Residential, and Mixed Use: Rural Residential districts.

*An assessment of the potential adverse effects on rare and endangered species within the proposed amendment area has been made and is applicable to the following: all development within the 35-foot regulated natural buffer adjacent to all perennial rivers, streams and creeks, and those which are intermittent in nature, but which have a distinct, identifiable stream bed or creek run, all development within the 75-foot regulated natural buffer adjacent to all perennial rivers, streams and creeks located within the significant natural areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan, all development within 35 feet of a wetland or water body other than as described above, and plan amendments which increase density or intensity of development in the Agricultural 1, Agricultural 2, Agricultural/Rural Residential, and Mixed Use/ Rural Residential districts. Please refer to section VI, E of this amendment package for the results of this assessment.*

*The development of the proposed amendment area is not anticipated to result in any adverse impacts to perennial rivers, streams, creeks, and their estuaries located within the significant natural areas identified in the Conservation Element of this Comprehensive Plan. No proposed development activities will occur in any perennial rivers, streams, creeks, and their estuaries of significant natural areas identified in the Conservation Element of this Comprehensive Plan. The coastal marsh and tidal swamp area is the only significant natural area in close proximity and is located adjacent to the proposed amendment area. Sweetwater Creek is located in the proposed amendment area which flows downstream into the adjacent significant natural area. Sweetwater Creek and the springs which flow into it shall be protected through the conservation sub-area. A bridge crossing over Sweetwater Creek is included in the proposed development plan in order to avoid and minimize impacts to this important natural feature. Therefore, a 75 foot buffer shall not apply to all portions of Sweetwater Creek within the proposed amendment area. A boardwalk to a canoe/ kayak launch is proposed so that residents and visitors may access Sweetwater Creek for passive recreation. No other activities are proposed to occur within 35 feet of Sweetwater Creek.*

*The proposed amendment area will maintain the natural functions of wetlands. Of the 1,057 acres of wetlands located within the proposed amendment area less than three percent will be directly impacted. Mitigation to offset proposed wetland impacts will be provided using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

*Listed species occurring or potential to occur within the proposed amendment area include the gopher tortoise, the Florida mouse, and several species of wading birds. A Wildlife Management Plan has been developed to prevent any potential adverse affects to these species. Please refer to Appendix A for a copy of the Wildlife Management Plan.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.4.2: The County shall require that when one or more of a rare or endangered species, are found on a development site, development activities which may cause harm to the species shall not be allowed until a management plan has been prepared which avoids the adverse effect of the project on the species.**

**The County shall require the use of best management practices for the conservation, appropriate use and protection of fisheries, wildlife and wildlife habitats, identify and protect native wildlife and their habitats, including state and federally protected plant and animal species (endangered, threatened and species of special concern), within proposed development sites and protection of these natural resources from the impacts of development by the use of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas maps, Florida Natural Areas Inventory, and North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan Regionally Significant Natural Resources map series to identify habitats which potentially contain endangered, threatened or species of special concern, and rare or unique vegetative communities prior to granting development approval.**

**Where adverse impacts cannot be avoided through site design or other means, the applicant shall be required to develop a mitigation plan which will allow no net loss of individuals of designated species, in coordination and compliance with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.**

**And**

**Conservation Element Policy V.4.3:** The County shall protect native vegetation and provides for the extensive use of native vegetation, thereby promoting the regeneration of natural habitats.

The developer of any proposed development which is equal to or greater than 20 acres and located within areas identified by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as Strategic Habitat Conservation Area or is shown as habitat for listed species on the Florida Natural Areas Inventory shall be required to evaluate the impacts to endangered, threatened, or species of special concern and rare or unique vegetative communities provided, however, if competent and substantial scientific evidence demonstrating that an endangered, threatened or species of special concern, wildlife habitat or rare and unique vegetative community is located within the area of any proposed development which is equal to or greater than 20 acres. Such evaluation shall be submitted to the County at the time a preliminary plat or site and development plan is reviewed by the County, the developer shall evaluate the impacts on such habitats or communities. As a condition of permit approval of any proposed development within these areas, such evaluation shall consist of a survey of the development site conducted by the developer to identify the presence of any state and federally protected plant and animal species.

If protected species are found on the development site or would be affected by the development, a management plan shall be required from the developer, including the necessary modifications to the proposed development, to ensure the preservation of the protected species and their habitat. Both the survey and the management plan shall be done in consultation with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, but the final approval of the management plan shall be by the County.

*Birkitt conducted pedestrian, vehicular, and boat surveys concurrently with the terrestrial and aquatic habitat surveys to determine the presence of listed species and associated habitats within and adjacent to the proposed project area. The listed species observed in the vicinity of the project during these surveys included various wading birds foraging in the salt marshes on site. In addition, American alligator, gopher tortoise, and Florida mouse habitat was identified. Best Management Practices have been used to conserve and protect natural resources within the proposed development site.*

*A wildlife management plan has been developed to prevent any potential adverse effects to these species and will be incorporated in this amendment package. Please refer to Appendix A for a copy of the Wildlife Management Plan. The wildlife management plan will include the use of best management practices for the conservation and protection of listed species and their habitats. The FWC Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas maps, Florida Natural Areas Inventory, and North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan Regionally Significant Natural Resources map series have been consulted in the development of the wildlife management plan to identify habitats which potentially contain listed species or their habitat. Therefore, no adverse impacts to individuals of designated species are expected from the proposed development.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.4.5:** The County shall use innovative techniques for preservation of such areas, such as: designation and regulations of conservation areas; site plan review; on-site density transfers to allow clustering of allowable units to protect environmentally sensitive portions of a site; and, overlay zoning whereby density calculations and developable land expectations are based on net developable acreage after excluding the environmentally sensitive portions.

*The 1,291-acre proposed amendment area is divided into three sub-areas: development sub-area, golf course sub-area, and conservation sub-area. The majority of the development is clustered onto six nodes consisting of approximately 127 acres or 10 percent of the proposed amendment area. The golf course will be located on approximately 147 acres or 11 percent of the proposed amendment area. A substantial portion of the acreage will be designated as conservation sub-area; approximately 1,017 acres or nearly 80 percent of the proposed amendment area. The conservation sub-area will serve as a buffer to the surrounding low-impact land uses, ensuring protection and compatibility. Therefore, the proposed amendment will further enhance this policy by clustering development in upland areas and establishing large conservation areas in order to protect natural areas and avoid impacts to environmentally sensitive portions of the site.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.4.7:** Prior to approving a plan amendment, in those areas designated Agricultural/Rural Residential, Mixed Use Rural Residential, and Mixed Use - Urban Development on the Future Land Use Map, the County shall require the applicant to provide an inventory of all wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, as well as documentation that the proposed user will not negatively impact environmentally sensitive lands.

*In total, there are approximately 1,057 acres of wetlands within the proposed amendment area boundary. Wetlands have been estimated using ground truthing and data gathering with specific data points taken in all ecologic habitat communities and along the jurisdictional wetland line. The jurisdictional wetland limits have been partially reviewed by the USACE during field visits in 2009 and additional guidance on establishing the remainder of the wetland jurisdictional limits has been provided. The wetland lines are shown on Figure 8 Wetlands.*

*Extensive efforts have been undertaken to avoid and minimize wetland impacts while maintaining an economically viable nature-based resort development. No impacts to marine resources or seagrasses are proposed. Direct impacts to freshwater wetlands from the proposed development are approximately 25.74 acres. No saltmarsh impacts are proposed. The only activity in the saltmarsh is the construction of boardwalks which will be designed at a height that allows vegetation to grow underneath.*

*Mitigation to offset proposed wetland impacts associated with the development of the amendment area will be provided and will be determined using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

*The development of the proposed amendment area shall comply with state permitting requirements, including all required mitigation and wetland buffers, in accordance with*

*Florida Statutory requirements, Chapter 62, F.A.C. Thus, the proposed project is consistent with these Comprehensive Plan provisions.*

**Conservation Element Policy V.4.11:** The county shall, during any development review process involving significant natural areas and their estuaries, address mitigation of development activities to ensure that the possible adverse impacts of the proposed development activity on the natural functions of these significant natural areas will be minimized, and that the natural functions will not be significantly altered. Mitigation measures must be acceptable to the Department of Environmental Protection or other governmental agency having mitigation permit jurisdiction. The significant natural areas and their estuaries to which this policy applies are:

**Aucilla River Corridor (includes Aucilla Sinks)  
Econfina River Corridor  
Spring Warrior Creek Corridor  
Steinhatchee River Corridor  
St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge  
Coastal Marsh and Tidal Swamp Conservation Areas  
Aucilla SRWMD Conservation Area**

The generalized location of these significant natural areas is as shown on the Future Land Use Map series. A separate map identifying the corridors of these significant natural areas shall be provided. Their boundaries are further described below:

In the case of the river corridors, the corridors shall include the river itself and extend to an outer boundary established at a nominal distance of 150 feet from the natural bank of the river. The Aucilla River corridor shall extend from the Gulf of Mexico to the county line. The Econfina River corridor shall extend from the Gulf of Mexico to the east boundary “rural community” established at Shady Grove. The Steinhatchee River corridor shall extend from the Gulf of Mexico to the county line.

In the case of the Spring Warrior Creek corridor, the corridor shall include the creek itself and extend to an outer boundary established at a nominal distance of 150 feet from the natural bank of the creek. The corridor shall extend from the Gulf of Mexico to C.R. 361 (Beach Road).

In the case of the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, the Coastal Marsh and Tidal Swamp Conservation Area and the Aucilla SRWMD Conservation Area, the boundary shall be the boundary of lands owned by the governmental entity. Resource based, low intensity recreation activities and facilities shall be allowed along rivers, with any new facility being located at least five miles from an existing facility.

Residential, commercial and industrial uses shall be allowed, subject to a setback of at least seventy-five (75) feet from the natural bank along the rivers and Spring Warrior Creek, subject to all other permitting requirements. Residential density shall be shown on the Future Land Use Map. Beyond seventy-five (75) feet,

residential, commercial and industrial use is allowed, subject to all other permitting requirements.

The densities and intensities of use, as well as the permitted uses allowed on the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, the Coastal Marsh and Tidal Swamp Conservation Area and the Aucilla SRWMD Conservation Area shall be consistent with the management plans for these areas in fulfillment of their conservation purpose. Residential densities shall not be greater than one unit per 40 acres, as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

*The development of the proposed amendment area is not anticipated to result in any adverse impacts on the natural functions of these significant natural areas and their estuaries. Development activities are not proposed to occur in any of these significant natural areas and their estuaries. The coastal marsh and tidal swamp area is the only significant natural area in close proximity and is located adjacent to the proposed development area. Extensive efforts have been taken to ensure that adverse effects on the adjacent significant natural resource are avoided. These efforts include the following: prohibition of motorized vessels, treatment of stormwater to heightened water quality standards for an OFW, and committing to certify the golf course at the Silver Level in the Audubon International Signature Sanctuary program. The stormwater treatment system will meet the heightened State water quality standards for an OFW and will meet the water quality criteria required by the SRWMD and FDEP regulations. The quality of treated stormwater will meet State standards thereby not adversely impacting coastal marsh and tidal swamp areas. The on-site golf course and associated structures will employ a NRMP designed by Audubon International. Following this NRMP will qualify the amendment area for the Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program, which recognizes areas that are designed and maintained with sustainable resource management practices for the long-term stewardship of the property. Such practices include reduced turf grass use and increased native plant utilization, non-chemical alternative methods of pest control, and effluent water use.*

*The development of the proposed amendment area will comply with state permitting requirements, including required mitigation and wetland buffers, in accordance with Chapter 62, F.A.C. Impacts to freshwater and/or estuarine wetlands that cannot be avoided shall be mitigated, in accordance with the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

**Recreation and Open Space Element Policy VI.1.1: The County shall maintain the number of access points to water oriented recreational resources for the County which will meet or exceed the level of service standards contained herein for resource based water related activities.**

**And**

**Recreation and Open Space Element Policy VI.3.1: The County hereby establishes the following level of service standards for resource based recreation facilities.**

<b><u>ACTIVITY</u></b>	<b><u>LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD</u></b>
Swimming (non-pool)	1 access point at a beach, spring, river, lake or pond for every 25,000 persons to be served.
Fishing (non-boat)	1 access point for every 10,000 persons to be served.
Fishing (boat)	1 boat ramp for every 5,000 persons to be served.
Camping (Recreation Vehicle and Tent)	1 acre of campground within a 25 mile radius of the County boundaries for every 25,000 persons to be served.
Picnicking	1 picnic table for every 500 persons to be served.
Hiking	1 mile of available hiking trail within a 25 mile radius of the County boundaries for every 10,000 persons to be served.
Nature Study	7 acres of managed conservation area within 25 miles of the County boundaries for every 10,000 persons to be served.

**And**

**Recreation and Open Space Element Objective VI.4:** The County shall establish provisions within the land development regulations, by October 1, 1990, which shall continue to require open space to be provided for new development and re-development.

*The proposed amendment area includes an approximately 1,017 acre conservation sub-area. Passive recreation shall be allowed in the conservation sub-area. The passive recreation opportunities available at The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary include: over four miles of kayak/canoe paddling trails within close proximity and easy access to The Historic Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail (Florida's first legislatively designated water trail); kayak/canoe and pedestrian access to Sweetwater Creek; bird watching; approximately 2.45 miles of scenic nature trails, boardwalks, and cart paths; an elevated boardwalk and educational plaques providing information about natural ecology and archeological and cultural resources of the area; and a boardwalk connecting the town center directly to the golf course. Passive recreational amenities at the Reserve will provide access to expanses of relatively undisturbed saltmarsh and forested wetlands. Visitors will be able to explore these natural areas along elevated boardwalks and designated cart/foot paths. Scenic overlooks will provide views of the saltmarsh and Gulf of Mexico. Bird watchers will be able to study a diversity of wading birds and estuarine species in their native habitat. Paddlers can access Sweetwater Creek with canoes/kayaks via a boardwalk and launch from a recreation area in Node C.*

*The proposed amendment area includes the golf course sub-area which consists of approximately 147 acres of open space. The golf course is an important amenity of the proposed development and will be connected directly to the town center with a boardwalk. The golf course will include the following features: 72 par/18 hole course, Clubhouse, Pro-Shop, Driving Range and Practice Facilities. The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary’s golf course features a championship design that enables the inexperienced player to gain a memorable, enjoyable experience, while challenging the more seasoned golfer with the excitement of novel bunkering and golfing-carries over challenging water features. The course setting is designed to challenge players of all skill levels. The proposed plan establishes a “links-style” course that evokes the feeling of playing the classic old golf courses in Ireland or Scotland. The golf course has been carefully designed to utilize the uplands areas and previously disturbed areas while incorporating the surrounding natural resources. Minimizing impacts to wetlands has been a major focus of the design effort. Additionally, the owner has committed to working with Audubon International for the development of resource management plans for long term protection of the environment and surrounding natural areas. The Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program application for The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary has been approved for review at the Bronze Level; however, application for Silver Level will be submitted. Please refer to Appendix H for a copy of correspondence with Audubon International. As a result, the proposed course site will allow the golfer to experience natural vegetation and water views including natural forested wetlands and upland intertwined with vistas of the Gulf of Mexico and saltmarshes. The course will face both the Gulf of Mexico and the woodlands and will be linked with the natural upland area east of the CR 361 along the eastern boundary of the property.*

**Capital Improvements Element Objective VIII.5: The County shall limit expenditures for infrastructure which subsidize growth within the coastal high hazard area, as identified within this Comprehensive Plan, to those public facility needs identified within the Coastal Management Element.**

**And**

**Capital Improvements Element Policy VIII.5.1: The County shall limit expenditures for new infrastructure within the coastal high hazard area to those public facility needs identified in the five year schedule of improvements within this Comprehensive Plan.**

*The developer shall construct all necessary facility infrastructure to serve the proposed project, including water, sewer, drainage and roadways. This infrastructure shall not be maintained by Taylor County.*

**Coastal Management Element Objective IX.1: The County shall assist in the protection, conservation, or enhancement of the County’s coastal wetlands, living marine resources and wildlife habitats.**

*The proposed amendment area will protect and conserve the natural functions of wetlands. Of the 1,057 acres of wetlands located within the proposed amendment area less than three percent will be directly impacted. Where impacts to wetlands are unavoidable, mitigation to offset proposed wetland impacts will be provided using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

*Sustainable design, building, and maintenance practices will also be implemented wherever possible. LID practices will be implemented to ensure that post construction hydrology imitates the natural hydrology of the site. LID will be achieved by focusing more intense development in upland areas, utilizing swales and pervious pavements to minimize stormwater runoff, water conservation measures and reuse when feasible, and integrating natural areas and wildlife corridors throughout the amendment area. Structures of the proposed amendment area will be constructed to meet LEED certification standards for green building design and sustainable site development. LEED standards address issues such as energy efficiency, water conservation, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and reducing the amount of materials sent to landfills.*

*The onsite golf course and associated structures will employ a NRMP designed by Audubon International. Following this NRMP will qualify the amendment area for the Audubon International Signature Program, which recognizes areas that are designed and maintained with sustainable resource management practices for the long-term stewardship of the property. Such practices include reduced turf grass use and increased native plant utilization, non-chemical alternative methods of pest control, and effluent water use.*

*The stormwater runoff in the proposed amendment area remaining from the minimization techniques will be treated to OFW standards. The required amount of treated runoff discharging to an OFW will be the volume of rainfall from the first 1.5 inches over the drainage area. The runoff, once treated by the proposed wet detention stormwater management systems, will meet criteria required by SRWMD and FDEP rules. The quality of the treated stormwater will meet state standards, thereby not adversely impacting offsite waters. Furthermore, motorized watercraft will be restricted in and around the proposed amendment area, which will further protect the County's coastal wetlands, living marine resources and wildlife habitats from adverse affects.*

**Coastal Management Element Policy IX.1.1: The County shall prohibit the installation of septic tanks: (1) in locations with unsuitable soils, (2) within wetland areas or (3) within areas where the impacts of the location of septic tanks will diminish water quality, wildlife habitats or living marine resources. Septic tank installations existing on October 1, 1990, shall be allowed to continue in operation, with reference to nonconforming uses and structures objective and related policies of the Future Land Use element of this Comprehensive Plan, and permits for replacement, maintenance or repair shall be issued subject to applicable regulations at the time the permit is issued. All septic tank permits shall be issued by the County Health Officer subject to applicable regulatory authority in effect on January 1, 2003.**

*The development of the proposed amendment area will not utilize septic tanks, but rather will be served by central wastewater.*

**Coastal Management Element Policy IX.1.4: The County shall limit dwelling unit density to one unit per five acres in rural areas within the Coastal High Hazard Area.**

*The proposed amendment will reduce the dwelling unit density within the CHHA below what is currently allowed under the adopted Taylor County Future Land Use Element of*

the Comprehensive Plan. Within the CHHA of the proposed amendment area, the adopted comprehensive plan would allow 226 dwelling units at a density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres. The proposed amendment would restrict development to 190 units within the CHHA resulting in a density of 1 dwelling unit per 6 acres. In addition, the amendment area is proposed as an urban use and is located between the urban communities of Dekle Beach and Keaton Beach. Therefore, this policy is not applicable.

**Coastal Management Element Objective IX.2: The County shall provide development standards which shall assist in the maintenance or improvement of the environmental quality of the Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserve and its associated estuaries.**

The proposed amendment area is located adjacent to the Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserve and no adverse effects to the Aquatic Preserve are anticipated. Extensive efforts have been made to ensure that proposed development will not affect this important natural resource of the state. These efforts include: restricting motorized vessels, treatment of stormwater to heightened water quality standards for an OFW, and committing to certify the golf course in the Audubon International Signature Sanctuary program.

Motorized watercraft access will be restricted from the proposed amendment area. The approved stormwater treatment system will meet the heightened State water quality standards for an OFW and will meet the water quality criteria required by the SRWMD and FDEP regulations. The quality of treated stormwater will meet State standards thereby not adversely impacting coastal marsh and tidal swamp areas.

The onsite golf course and associated structures will employ a NRMP designed by Audubon International. Following this NRMP will qualify the amendment area for the Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program, which recognizes areas that are designed and maintained with sustainable resource management practices for the long-term stewardship of the property. Such practices include reduced turf grass use and increased native plant utilization, non-chemical alternative methods of pest control, and effluent water use. The golf course will obtain and maintain the designation at the Silver Level in the Audubon International Signature Cooperative Sanctuary Program. The Audubon International Signature Sanctuary Program application for The Reserve at Sweetwater Estuary has been approved for review at the Bronze Level; however, application for Silver Level will be submitted. Please refer to Appendix H for a copy of correspondence with Audubon International.

The proposed development plans will provide passive recreational access to this important natural resource. Residents of and visitors to the proposed development shall be allowed to access this natural resource via a proposed boardwalk and a canoe/ kayak launch. These activities are clearly the type authorized by the Aquatic Preserve Act.

Proposed development locations and building design, construction, and maintenance practices are tailored to maintain the integrity of environmentally sensitive lands. No area below the Mean High Water line is proposed to be impacted by the placement of pilings for the proposed boardwalks. Piles will be driven with silt fences and turbidity curtains installed as needed to minimize construction impacts. Decking for the boardwalks will be placed at an elevation greater than six feet above existing ground

*elevation providing sufficient light penetration to protect salt marsh vegetation under the boardwalks and prevent shading impacts. The design proposed is comparable to those used in state parks to protect sensitive resources while providing public access. The coastal boardwalks will also have educational signage describing the natural and cultural resources of the area.*

*Additionally, the proposed amendment will create an approximately 1,017 acre conservation sub-area. The conservation area is the remainder of the land that is not developed and shall be designated conservation as described above.*

**Coastal Management Element Policy IX.2.2:** The County as part of the development review process shall require new development and redevelopment which may cause disruptions or degradations to wetlands or the aquatic preserve to include mitigating measures.

*The proposed development will not cause any disruptions or degradations to the aquatic preserve. The proposed amendment area will maintain the natural functions of wetlands. Of the 1,057 acres of wetlands located within the proposed amendment area, less than three percent will be directly impacted. Where impacts to wetlands are unavoidable, mitigation will be provided using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method, Chapter 62-345 F.A.C.*

**Coastal Management Element Policy IX.3.1:** The County shall continue to maintain the following priority in the development of standards for the location of water dependent uses along the shoreline as follows:

1. Public use marinas;
2. Other water oriented recreation;
3. Commercial fishing;
4. Water related uses;
5. Water dependent industries or utilities; and
6. All other permitted uses.

*A marina was initially requested for the proposed amendment area but determined not permissible in this location. However, the proposed resort development will provide for water-oriented passive recreational opportunities. The passive recreational opportunities available at the proposed amendment area include: Over four miles of kayak/canoe paddling trails within close proximity and easy access to The Historic Big Bend Saltwater Paddling Trail (Florida's first legislatively designated water trail); Kayak/canoe and pedestrian access to Sweetwater Creek; Bird Watching; approximately 2.45 miles of scenic nature trails, boardwalks and cart paths; an elevated boardwalk, and educational plaques providing information about natural ecology and archeological and cultural resources of the area; and a boardwalk connecting the town center directly to the golf course. Passive recreational amenities at the Reserve will provide access to expanses of relatively undisturbed saltmarsh and forested wetlands. Visitors will be able to explore these natural areas along elevated boardwalks and designated cart/foot paths. Scenic overlooks will provide views of the saltmarsh and Gulf of Mexico. Bird watchers will be able to study a diversity of wading birds and estuarine species in their native habitat.*

**Coastal Management Element Objective IX.5:** The County, through the Procedure for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Capital Improvements Element, shall limit expenditures that subsidize development within coastal high-hazard areas to the restoration or enhancement of natural resources, the construction and maintenance of roads necessary for public access, and the provision of public park facilities, including those which provide public access to the shoreline, subject to the provisions of the nonconforming uses and structures objective and related policies of the Future Land Use element of this Comprehensive Plan.

**AND**

**Coastal Management Element Policy IX.5.2:** The County shall limit development which is vulnerable to natural hazards such as storm surge and high winds within coastal high hazard areas, subject to the provisions of the nonconforming uses and structures objective and related policies of the Future Land Use element of this Comprehensive Plan.

**AND**

**Coastal Management Element Policy IX.5.3:** The County, as part of the development review process, shall require the location of public facilities, except roads parks and required for public access, away from coastal high-hazard areas where such public facilities have the potential for being damaged during a storm. Public facilities, which are owned and operated by local government or a governmental authority and such facility serves areas where private sanitary facilities are not adequate to protect surface and ground water quality, shall be permitted to be located within coastal high-hazard areas.

*Development of the proposed amendment area, which is located partially within the CHHA, is limited to small nodes of land comprising approximately ten percent of the site. Of the 624 dwelling units proposed only 190 units will be located in the CHHA. This level of development is less than what is currently allowed under the adopted Taylor County Future Land Use Map within the CHHA. The overall site will have a proposed gross residential density of approximately one unit per two acres. The applicant will be funding the construction of central water and sewer treatment plants to serve the proposed amendment at locations away from the CHHA.*

**Coastal Management Element OBJECTIVE IX.6:** The County shall maintain the residential land use densities provided within this element of the Comprehensive Plan to assist in the limitation of undue population concentration in coastal high-hazard areas as defined in the Sanitary Sewer, Solid Waste, Drainage, Potable Water, and Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge element of this Comprehensive Plan.

**And**

**Coastal Management Element Policy IX 6.5:** The County shall limit dwelling unit density to four units per acre in designated urban development areas which are served by community or public water systems and up to 12 units per acre when served by community or public water and sanitary sewer systems within the Coastal High Hazard Area.

*The proposed residential density of approximately one unit per two acres in the amendment area, which will be served by central water and sewer, is substantially below the overall density limitation applicable to the project site.*

**Coastal Management Element Policy IX.6.4:** The County shall limit residential development and resident populations within coastal high hazard areas to locations and numbers which can be safely evacuated during hurricane hazard periods.

**And**

**Coastal Management Element Objective IX.7:** The County shall maintain hurricane evacuation times of 9 hours for a category 1 storm and 22 hours for a category 5 storm for the residents of the Coastal Management Area.

*A hurricane evacuation analysis was performed in order to provide data and analysis to determine whether there will be adequate evacuation time and shelter space to accommodate the residents of the development contemplated by the proposed comprehensive plan amendment. The Hurricane Evacuation Impact Analysis indicates that even with maximum expected traffic from the Withlacoochee area to its south and a build out of the Sweetwater Community, Taylor County has a clearance time of only 5.0 hours in a Category 1 hurricane and 9.2 hours in a Category 5 hurricane with high tourist occupancy. Much of this time is built in behavioral response time and not even actual traffic demand servicing time. These times are much lower than the county's standard of 9 and 22 hours for a minor and major hurricane.*

*Furthermore, the Hurricane Evacuation Impact Analysis indicates that public shelter evacuees from the proposed amendment site will experience no more than 92 to 146 minutes of evacuation time from the proposed development to the closest public shelter. This compares very favorably to the 12-hour criteria set by the State of Florida Statutes Chapter 163.3178. Therefore, the Hurricane Evacuation Impact Analysis clearly demonstrates that the proposed mixed-use resort development will have minimal impacts on hurricane evacuation clearance time and public sheltering. For more details, refer to Section VII.(F) and Appendix F.*

**Coastal Management Element Policy IX.12.4:** The County shall require all future land use in the coastal area to be evaluated for consistency with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection management plans for the Big Bend Seagrasses designation.

*Development within the project area was evaluated for consistency with the FDEP Management Plan for the Big Bend Aquatic Preserve by Melissa Charbonneau, Aquatic Preserve Manager, Coastal Aquatic Management Areas (CAMA). All of CAMAs comments and concerns were addressed.*