

**Audubon of Southwest Florida
Collier County Audubon Society
Conservancy of Southwest Florida
Responsible Growth Management Coalition
Peace River Audubon Society
Sanibel-Captiva Audubon Society**

March 16, 2007

The Honorable Charlie Crist
Office of the Governor
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

RE: FDOT Heartland Parkway Corridor Study, and other corridors.

Dear Governor Crist:

Our Southwest Florida interested organizations, Peace River Audubon Society, Sanibel-Captiva Audubon Society, Responsible Growth Management Coalition, Conservancy of Southwest Florida, Audubon of Southwest Florida and Collier County Audubon Society, write to you in support of the recent joint letter you received from 1000 Friends of Florida, Audubon of Florida, Florida Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, and Defenders of Wildlife regarding the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) proposed Future Corridors Action Plan. We are in complete agreement with these groups' perspectives on this issue and their recommendation to you that the Corridor Action Plan be rescinded by FDOT and that you direct Secretary Tom Pelham and the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) transform the process into a regionally-based comprehensive community and resource protection planning effort. We firmly believe such planning and visioning must precede any infrastructure considerations and DCA is the one agency with the broad authority and expertise to effectively offer that planning process leadership and coordinate the needed diverse dialogue.

We are very concerned that FDOT has and will continue to abort the necessary analysis and emphasis on environmental, community and economic sustainability. As evidence of this concern, we attach a proposed resolution and executive summary for consideration by Collier County Board of Commissioners later this spring to endorse the Heartland Parkway, without even looking at broader sustainability issues, environmental context or community planning and need. It is not at all clear that the meager studies mentioned provide this foundation for endorsement by anyone at this stage.

In view of considerable confusion and ill-advised priorities in the existing FDOT Corridors process, we strongly urge you to direct DCA to assume leadership of the discussion and planning obviously necessary for consideration of any regional scale land use changes in the Heartland, Southwest Florida, and throughout the state where such corridors and growth have been proposed.

Sincerely,

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Attachments: Collier BCC Resolution of Support for Heartland Parkway, draft and executive summary.

cc: Secretary Tom Pelham, DCA