

Brittany A. Banko

Ecologist



Expertise

Environmental Resource Program (ERP) Permitting and Compliance

Wetland Delineation, Evaluation, Mitigation and Restoration

Aquatic System Evaluation

Wildlife Ecology and Permitting

Education

B.S., Environmental Science and Policy, University of South Florida, 2008

Certifications

SWFWMD Wetland Assessment Procedure (WAP) Training, 2014

FDEP Qualified Stormwater Management Inspector

SSI Open Water Diver (2006)

FDEP Wetland Delineation Training 2013

Authorized Gopher Tortoise Agent, GTA-15-00007

Affiliations/Memberships

Florida Native Plant Society

Florida Association of Environmental Professionals

Brittany has in depth experience in permitting projects that require environmental resource permits, mangrove trimming and alteration, as well as sovereignty submerged land authorizations. She has also developed experience in wetland delineation, scientific diving, and GIS. Her primary responsibilities include conducting wetland delineations/evaluations and permitting, wildlife surveys, and participating in client and agency interactions.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PROGRAM (ERP) PERMITTING & COMPLIANCE

Environmental Specialist - Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Southwest District
Reviewed and processed ERP exemptions, general permits, individual permits, conceptual permits, state lands lease and easement applications, and mangrove trimming and alteration applications. Conducted site inspections that sometimes involved scientific diving.

Environmental Specialist - Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Southwest District
Conducted permit compliance inspections, complaint response and investigation. Conducted site inspections that sometimes involved scientific diving.

WETLAND DELINEATION, EVALUATION, MITIGATION, AND RESTORATION

Project Ecologist - Substation and Transmission Line, Throughout Florida

Provided site assessments, wetland delineations, general and species-specific listed species surveys, FWS and FWC listed species permitting, listed species relocations, and permit compliance monitoring for several substations and transmission lines in Florida.

Project Ecologist –Jurisdictional Wetland Determination, Hardee County, Florida

Conducted wetland delineation consistent with the methods outlined in 62-340, Florida Administrative Code. Assisted wetland delineation teams using methodologies outlined in USACE 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual. The resultant wetland lines were submitted as part of a Formal Determination of Wetlands. In addition, the delineation was used as the basis for a federal wetland delineation consistent with the USACE.

Project Ecologist – UMAM Rule Development and Field Testing – Throughout Florida

Participated in testing of the FDEP draft UMAM scoring method and compared raw scoring variables, risk, functional loss, and/or functional gain to scores for assessment areas previously approved by FDEP during the ERP application process.

AQUATIC SYSTEM EVALUATION

Project Ecologist – Stream Velocity Measurements, Hardee County, Florida

Measured stream velocities within nine systems in accordance with FDEP SOP-001/01 FT 1800 using a Hach FH950 portable velocity meter. The velocity measurements were taken thrice-weekly during an uncharacteristically rainy September in 2014 and used to calculate discharge. These systems were all low-order streams with ephemeral to intermittent flow.

Project Ecologist – Stream Mapping and Evaluation, Hardee County, Florida

Developed a detailed baseline depiction of the ±4,000 linear feet of stream using a combination of high-resolution aerial imagery and Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment. For conveyances in areas of primarily native upland or wetland land cover, and for conveyances in agricultural areas exhibiting more-or-less natural stream sinuosity, a Trimble sub-meter GPS unit was used to record a track along center of the channel. The line features collected this way were later traced at a scale of 1:600 using ArcGIS software. This smoothed centerline was created in order to remove the extra "noise" from the GPS antenna movement during data collection. Nested GPS points and photographs were collected to demarcate and illustrate changes in channel dimensions, substrate or overbank area characteristics. Overall segment sinuosity ratios and local bend geometries (radius of curvature) were calculated from these GPS lines of each stream segment. Each stream segment was also observed for barriers to fish passage, such as hanging culverts.

WILDLIFE ECOLOGY AND PERMITTING

Project Ecologist - Gopher Tortoise Surveying, Throughout Florida

Surveyed project areas throughout Florida for gopher tortoise burrows in preparation for application submittal to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Nightly Penguin Research and Habitat Restoration – Phillip Island Nature Park, Australia

Conducting nightly penguin counts with park rangers to assist in estimating population changes, construction and installation of artificial nests, re-vegetation, and removal of exotic species.