

FLORIDIANS FOR BETTER



TRANSPORTATION

## SHUT-DOWN OF MINING WOULD HALT FLORIDA HIGHWAY PROJECTS

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If a Federal Judge in Miami moves to restrict mining while federal agencies redo environmental studies used to issue mining permits, much of Florida could face unimaginable traffic gridlock. These dramatic consequences were documented by the Florida Department of Transportation in a brief submitted to the court yesterday.

Doug Callaway, President of Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT), said "if the Federal Judge wants these agencies to re-do their studies – that's one thing – but he should not consider action that will have such a dramatic and negative impact on the entire state of Florida." FBT believes in "Keeping Florida Moving!" and any action resulting in increased transportation construction costs in Florida would have the exact OPPOSITE effect.

According to the Florida DOT brief:

*"The loss of Lake Belt aggregate materials will compromise the Department's ability to continue to provide the public with safe driving surfaces." – page 5*

*". . . a complete termination of Lake Belt mining will require*

- *the suspension of construction on every current and imminent Department job in Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River counties (Department Districts 4 and 6),*
- *at least seventy percent (70%) of the Department jobs in the Tampa Bay area (District 7),*
- *sixty percent (60%) of the jobs in Southwest Florida (District 1) and the Turnpike,*
- *and twenty-five percent (25%) of the jobs in Central Florida and Northeast Florida (Districts 5 and 2)."* – DOT Brief, page 6

(continued...)

*“Loss of Lake Belt aggregates will also shut down Department capacity construction projects.” - DOT Brief,page 5*

*“It is safe to say that a shortage of aggregates will have the following effects:*

- 1. Short and long-term disruptions and shortages of aggregates for transportation projects and for commercial and residential construction;*
- 2. Rapid rises in tonnage prices for future aggregate products, perhaps escalating two to four times present prices; and*
- 3. Price spikes for supplies that are available. The ripple effect of these pricing issues will impact other sectors of the Florida economy and are expected to cause rapid escalation of residential and commercial construction costs, more frequent scheduling delays on on-going construction projects, cancellation of projects, layoffs and economic hardships to other supporting trades and suppliers, and a recession in the Florida primary and secondary home markets.”*  
*- DOT Brief,page 9*

The Florida DOT brief was written for consideration by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, Miami Division, in determining what action should be considered in the wake of the court’s March 22, 2006 decision (Case No. 03-23427-CIV- Hoeveler) to remand environmental studies back to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT) is a statewide business and transportation association dedicated to making transportation safer and more efficient in Florida. FBT has a diverse membership of over 180 businesses, organizations, and individuals, including the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Publix Super Markets, AAA Auto Club South, SunTrust Bank, the Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers, the Florida Transportation Builders Association, the Florida Public Transportation Association, the Florida Ports Council, the Florida MPO Advisory Council, the Florida Airports Council, and numerous local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, MPOs, and transit providers all across the Sunshine State.

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