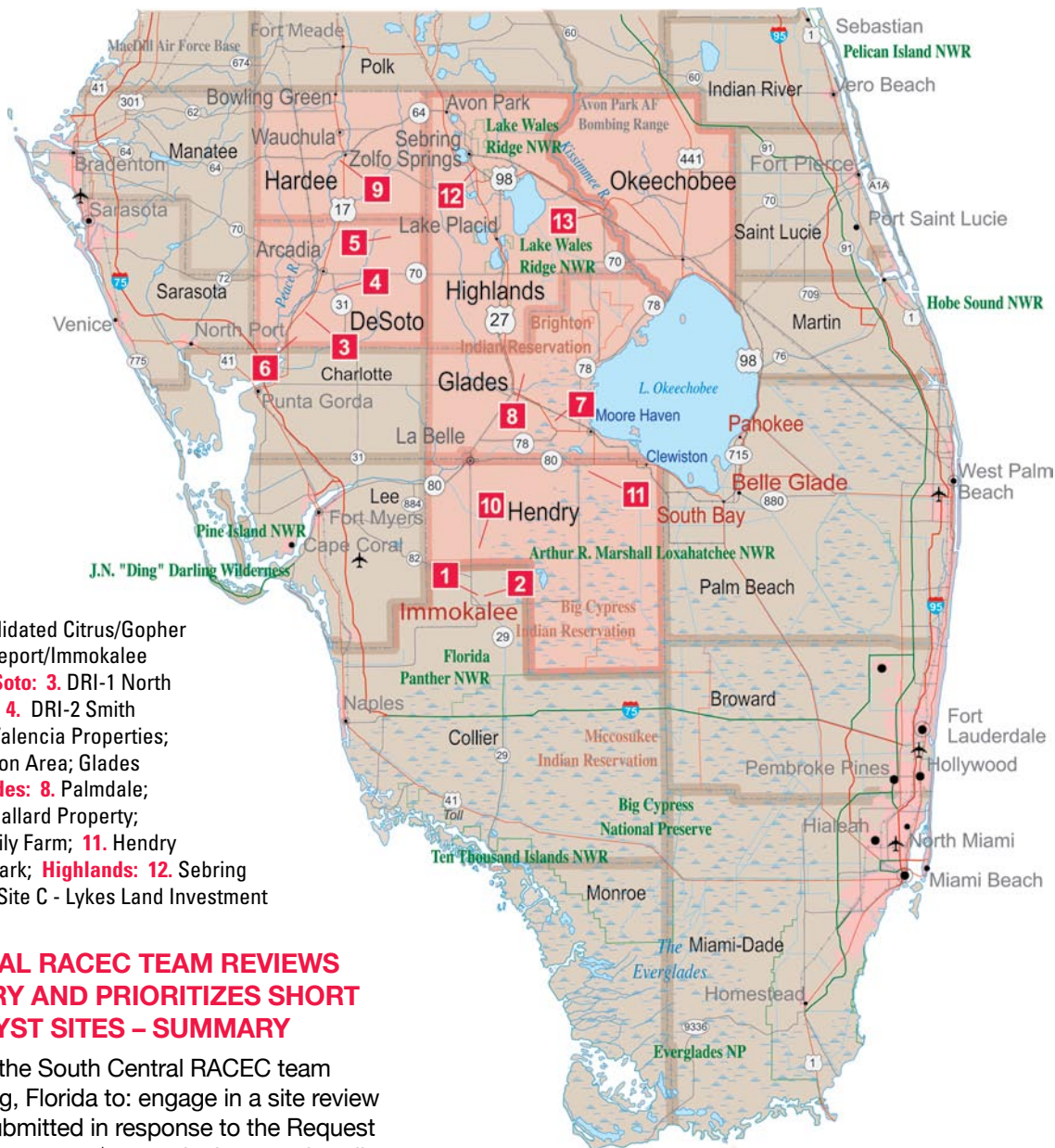


Rural Economic Development *Catalyst* Project

PROGRESS REPORT

Issue IV, May 2007

South Central RACEC Team Submits *Catalyst* Sites



SITE LOCATION KEY

Immokalee: 1. Consolidated Citrus/Gopher Ridge; 2. Florida Tradeport/Immokalee Regional Airport; **DeSoto:** 3. DRI-1 North American Properties; 4. DRI-2 Smith Properties; 5. DRI-3 Valencia Properties; 6. Wal-Mart Distribution Area; **Glades:** 7. Moore Haven; 8. Palmdale; **Hardee:** 9. Maurice Ballard Property; **Hendry:** 10. Finks Family Farm; 11. Hendry Airglades Industrial Park; **Highlands:** 12. Sebring Regional Airport; 13. Site C - Lykes Land Investment

SOUTH CENTRAL RACEC TEAM REVIEWS SITE INVENTORY AND PRIORITIZES SHORT LIST OF CATALYST SITES – SUMMARY

On April 27, 2007 the South Central RACEC team returned to Sebring, Florida to: engage in a site review of all properties submitted in response to the Request for Sites (RFS); discuss a 3rd party site locator short list of properties best suited for the target industry priority of *Healthcare and Sciences*; and supplement and prioritize short list of catalytic sites. The regionally-driven, prioritized short list gives Enterprise Florida, Inc., Florida’s Heartland Rural Economic Development Initiative, Inc. (FHREDI), and county, municipal, not-for-profit and community stakeholders throughout the

South Central RACEC the collective aspirations of the regional team.

(continued)



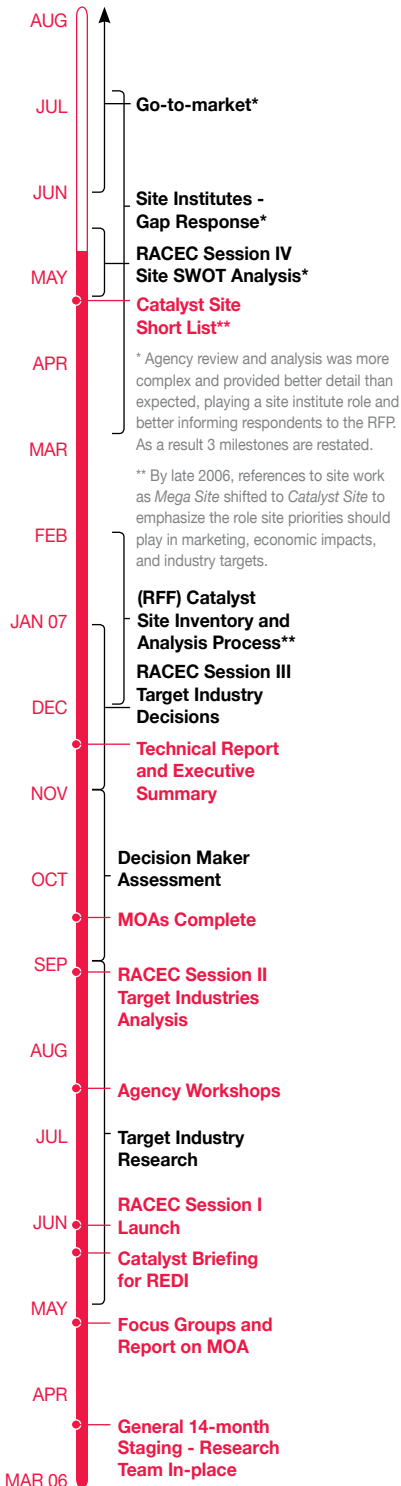
SUMMARY (continued)

During the RACEC team meeting III in November of 2006, the Region saw existing occupational characteristics in the *Healthcare and Sciences* industry as relatively strong, recognized that Florida has become a global life sciences player, and wanted to focus on attraction of knowledge workers. As a result, a Request For Sites (RFS) was customized for the target industry with enough detail for regulatory agency review.

The regional team submitted 13 sites during the RFS period (December 2006 through January 2007). All sites were pre-qualified and submitted to Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) agencies for review in critical areas such as transportation, environment, and archeology. At the close of REDI review, no site had a fatal flaw that would exclude it from participating in a portfolio of properties for the South Central RACEC.

The RACEC team received a 3rd party site location perspective on all 13 sites. With supplementation by session attendees, the short list included 5 sites. The detailed reviews provide South Central RACEC leaders with information and value that surpass routine company-driven, short-listing processes.

KEY RESULTS: A PORTFOLIO AND PRIORITIES



REGIONAL PORTFOLIO →

The South Central RACEC and all regional partners now have a portfolio of 13 sites that may be leveraged for future opportunities.

DETAILS FOR ACTION →

Analyses of the 13 sites by REDI agencies and Fairfield Index's site location director provide the region and local partners with significant information on site strengths, limitations and areas for improvement. The detailed reviews provide South Central leaders with information and value that surpass routine, company-driven short listing processes.

KNOWLEDGE →

The RACEC team is stronger and better-informed as a coalition through the utilization of demographic updates, target industry research, and site detail.

DATA RESOURCES →

Research detail on demographics and target industries are available to all RACEC team members on CD and through the Enterprise Florida, Inc. web site.



PRIORITIZING THE SHORT LIST

Working in small, regional groups, the RACEC team reviewed and supplemented a short list of sites that could ultimately go-to-market as realistic and competitive opportunities. In no priority order, they included: Immokalee Florida Tradeport; Highlands Sebring Regional Airport; Hendry Airglades Industrial Park; DeSoto Wal-Mart Distribution Area, and Glades Palmdale. (The 3rd party evaluative tool used for the site analysis was applied to all 13 sites, and included standard site location processes and feedback from key agencies. The tool produced a site *Scorecard* and short list.)

The 5 short list sites were discussed in small regional groups and in county teams. These discussions resulted in a number of key considerations and perspectives including:

- Ensure that site prioritization results in the best possible impact on the Region as a whole
- All short list sites matter (and each could become top priority) because of changing conditions
- The top short list site matters most because of limited resources but, over time, we want the entire short list to be as competitive as possible, as soon as possible
- Getting a priority site to *shovel ready* status is critical

NEXT STEPS – GETTING SHOVEL READY AND GOING TO MARKET

With the benefits of prioritization by the regional team, REDI agencies, the RACEC team, and Enterprise Florida, Inc. are in a position to focus on the right scale of investment, gap-filling, and preparation relative to the Highlands Sebring Regional Airport site. This work will also extend into issues of workforce and training.

As the site reaches *shovel readiness* for the target industry, a go-to-market strategy will be customized and launched. Marketing will encompass the key

strengths and assets of the entire South Central RACEC, and leverage the site as a competitive choice for targets. Bob Rohrlack, VP – Enterprise Florida, Inc., emphasized the global reach of Enterprise Florida and the ability to insert the RACEC competitive messages and priority site into Florida’s arsenal of assets. He also observed that urban markets routinely convene key decision makers to select targets and identify site assets, but, “I have never seen so many governments and communities work together to make these decisions for a region”.

The final prioritization was informed by 4 ½ hours of team and small group discussions, and set through county team forced ranking. As a result, the priority short list is:

Priority Site A: Highlands County
Sebring Regional Airport

Priority Site B: Hendry County
Hendry Airglades Industrial Park

Priority Site C: DeSoto County
Wal-Mart Distribution Area

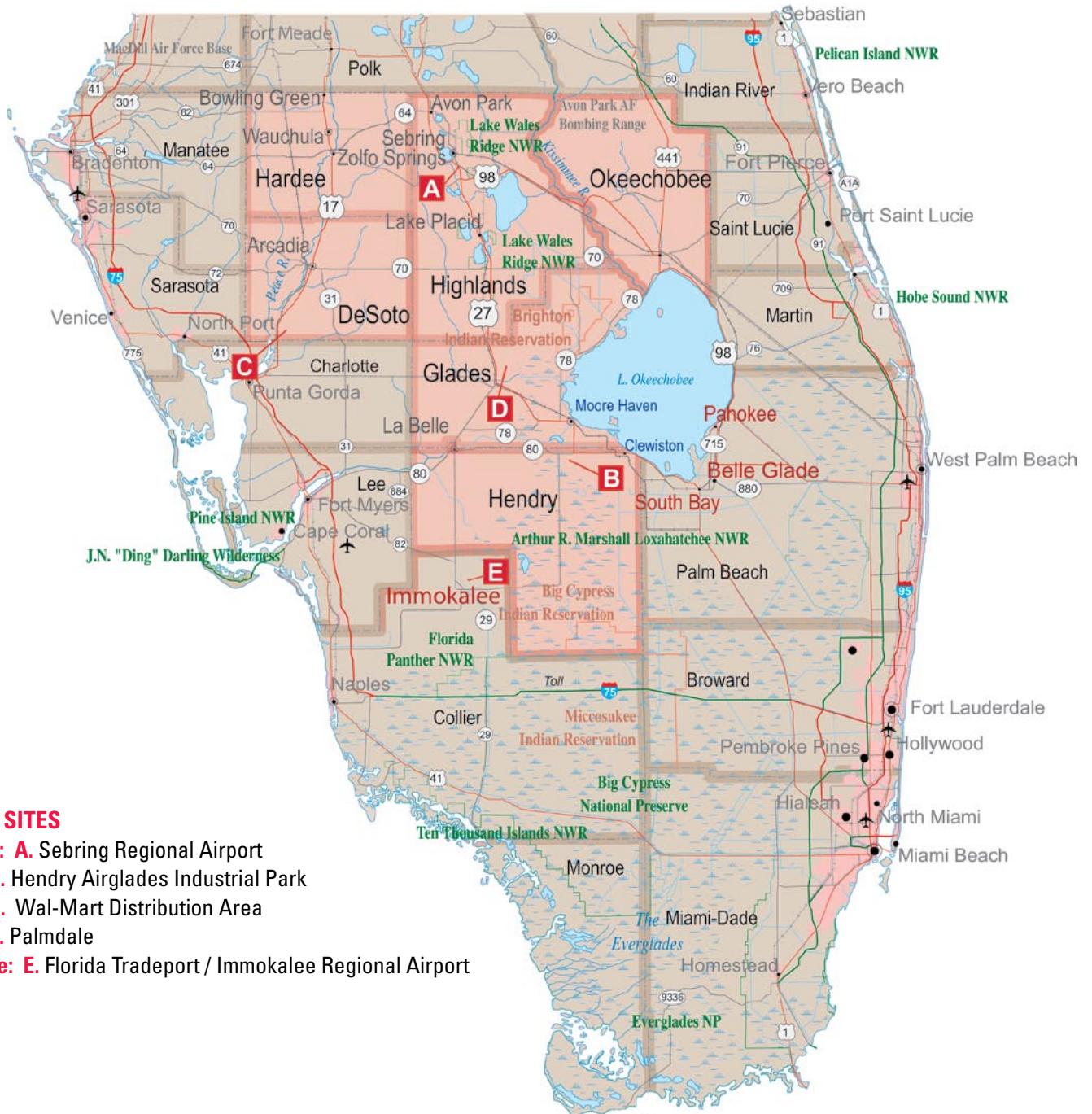
Priority Site D: Glades County
Palmdale

Priority Site E: Immokalee Community
Immokalee Florida Tradeport

See Page 4 for Location of Priority Sites A through E



South Central RACEC



PRIORITY SITES

- Highlands: A.** Sebring Regional Airport
- Hendry: B.** Hendry Airglades Industrial Park
- DeSoto: C.** Wal-Mart Distribution Area
- Glades: D.** Palmdale
- Immokalee: E.** Florida Tradeport / Immokalee Regional Airport

Regional Partner Organization



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<http://www.eflorida.com/strategicplan/ruralbase.asp?sectionid=26>



Prepared by Fairfield Index, Inc.

DESOTO, GLADES, HARDEE, HENDRY, HIGHLANDS, AND OKEECHOBEE COUNTIES; AND THE COMMUNITIES OF IMMOKALEE (COLLIER COUNTY), AND SOUTH BAY, PAHOKEE, AND BELLE GLADE (PALM BEACH COUNTY)