

EW CONSULTANTS, INC.  
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, WETLAND, AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERMITTING SERVICES



# **DELRAY RIDGE**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Prepared for:

**Ellish Builders / Marmat Homes  
902 Clint Moore Rd, Suite 128  
Boca Raton, FL 33487**

Prepared by:

**EW CONSULTANTS, INC.**

**June 2021**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Environmental Assessment Report documents and summarizes natural resource features present on the Delray Ridge property in the City of Delray Beach. The subject 5.4-acre property covered by this environmental assessment consists of three parcels with existing single family homes. The property is within Section 4, Township 46 south, and Range 43 east, in the City of Delray Beach in Palm Beach County, Florida. The property is generally rectangular in shape and is bordered on the north by residential homes and a school; on the east by vacant and commercial properties; on the west by Swinton Avenue; and on the south by NE 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. Location maps and a 2020 aerial photograph are provided in the Appendix as Figures 1 through 3.

## **PROPERTY DESCRIPTION AND METHODS**

The property is currently comprised of vacated single family homes and associated structures such as sheds, swimming pools, decks, and driveways. There are some densely vegetated areas found throughout the property, however, these vegetated areas are dominated by non-native species and as such do not contain the fundamental components or strata to be considered as native habitat communities.

Chronological review of historical aerial imagery dating to the late 1950's indicates that a network of surrounding roads, regional drainage ways, and two residential units were constructed prior to that date and the parcel appears to be clear of the majority of vegetation other than scattered trees and low or mowed ground cover and grass and shrubs. Throughout the historical imagery the vegetated areas of the parcel have been mowed or otherwise had the understory altered, and has been used as storage for a variety of vehicles and vessels while the majority of the canopy appear to remain intact over this period.

Prior to the site visit, the U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute Quadrangle Topographic Map, "Delray Beach" Quadrangle, and the *Soils Survey of Palm Beach County Area, Florida* (U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service 1970) were reviewed to determine topographic features and site soil mapping units. Copies of the 2020 Palm Beach County aerial photographs of the parcels were obtained and reviewed to determine potential locations of environmental features.

Pedestrian transects of the parcels were conducted to map approximate locations and boundaries of significant environmental resources, vegetative communities, exotic vegetation, and potential jurisdictional wetland areas. The survey was also conducted to note any occurrence of listed

plant or animal species and vegetative communities which would require protection or identification by the Federal, State or local regulatory agencies.

Wetland protection is mandated under federal, state, and local regulations. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (CE) regulates activities in Waters of the United States pursuant to the Clean Water Act (PL92-500 Section 404) as further defined in the CE regulatory program (33 CFR 320-330). The State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has established wetland identification and permitting processes at Chapter 62-330, 62-340, and 62-312 of the Florida Administrative Code (FAC). Current federal and state wetland definitions are derived from the original definition found in 33 CFR 328.3, identifying wetlands as “those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted to life in saturated soil conditions”. Delineation of federally regulated jurisdictional wetlands is determined by the Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual (USAE Waterways Experiment Station Environmental Laboratory 1987) and the Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain Region (USAE Research and Development Center 2010). Delineation of wetlands regulated by DEP and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is done according to Chapter 62-340 FAC, Delineation of the Landward Extent of Wetlands and Surface Waters. The Florida Wetlands Delineation Manual (Gilbert et al. 1995) serves as a guide to Chapter 62-340. Both manuals, which emphasize the identification of hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and wetland hydrologic conditions in making wetland determinations, were used in this investigation.

## **SOILS**

The soils on the site are mapped as St. Lucie-Paola-Urban land complex. A description of the soil types in their natural conditions is listed below. These descriptions are based upon the general characteristics for the soil types as illustrated in the Soils Survey of Palm Beach County Area, Florida and are not necessarily indicative of the exact characteristics of the parcel. A soils map with the site boundary is included in the Appendix as an attachment.

St. Lucie-Paola-Urban land complex (41) – This complex consists of nearly level, excessively drained, sandy soils and are mostly in urban use. The areas occur as part of the Coastal Ridge along the coast in the eastern part of the county. The natural vegetation would be sand pine, scrub oak, and undergrowth of saw-palmetto, rosemary, cacti, and native grasses. More specifically, St. Lucie soils are nearly level to sloping and are excessively drained. Typically, they have a thin surface layer of gray sand. Below that is white sand that extends to a depth of more than 80 inches. Urban land is made up of areas where streets, buildings, parking lots, and other structures cover more than 75 percent of the land. In residential areas, streets, houses, sidewalks, and other structures cover 25 to 50 percent of the land. Paola soils are nearly level to sloping and are excessively drained. Typically, they have a thin surface layer of dark gray sand and a subsurface layer of white sand.

## **NATURAL COMMUNITIES AND LAND COVERS**

The Guide to the Natural Communities of Florida (Florida Natural Areas Inventory 1990) provides classification of natural communities of Florida and was used in this investigation. Approximate location of vegetative community cover type boundaries and other features of the site were mapped in accordance with Florida Land Use Cover and Forms Classification Systems Handbook (Florida Department of Transportation 1999) (FLUCFCS).

Field reconnaissance and aerial photograph interpretation were employed in the mapping effort of the vegetative communities on the subject site. The vegetative community descriptions include discussions of potential wildlife habitat in those communities. A land cover map of the observed community types with acreage is included as Figure 4 in the Appendix of this report.

### **110 Residential, Low Density – 5.4 acres**

This land use comprises the entire property which is developed with three, now vacated single-family homes, with storage buildings or sheds, perimeter fences, swimming pools, driveways, and pathways. The vegetative community is comprised of a combination of scattered native plants and subtropical ornamental plants in addition to invasive exotic species and does not represent any one intact native community. It also appears some cultivated species and some of the natives have been planted here as opposed to being naturally occurring. Exotic tree species dominate the canopy strata in areas where canopy exists, and exotic and nuisance species dominate the subcanopy and groundcover levels. Live oak, cabbage palm, gumbo limbo, royal poinciana and sea grape are the dominant native tree species found at the canopy level while non-native mango, schefflera, ficus species, bishofia, carrtewood, ornamental palms, Australian pine, bamboo and sapodilla dominate the overall canopy. The subcanopy and groundcover is dominated by nuisance, exotic and cultivated landscape species such as carrotwood, areca and other ornamental palm trees, surinum cherry, arum species, dieffenbachia species, creeping ox-eye, oyster plant, and ruderal grasses and weeds.

## **LISTED SPECIES AND WILDLIFE**

Listed species of wildlife are found in *Florida's Endangered Species, Threatened Species and Species of Special Concern, Official Lists* (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission December 2018) and regulated plants are listed in *Preservation of Native Flora of Florida*, Chapter 5B-40 (Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry, April 2004). A preliminary series of pedestrian transects were conducted across the property to determine the presence of any listed species, especially gopher tortoises which prefer dry, sandy soils in eastern communities.

No listed plant or wildlife species, nor signs of such species, were observed.

Non-listed wildlife and wildlife signs observed includes squirrels, mockingbird, cardinals, mourning dove, Cuban anole, feral cat, black racer snake, and golden-orb spiders.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The property has long been used for single-family residences and the land contains typical disturbances associated with this use, such as clearing of understory vegetative strata, construction of accessory structures and planting of ornamental plants. The assessment found scattered occurrences of native vegetative species, but no wetland habitat and no listed species of plants or wildlife.

The City of Delray Beach Land Development Regulations define vegetative communities and trees that require preservation, protection, or mitigation. The City requires review for native plant communities and requires preservation and incorporation of these areas into open space where possible.

This property does not contain any intact native plant communities and therefore preserve set-aside areas should not apply to the development of this property. However, the City also requires preservation or relocation of individual upland native trees and plants wherever possible. The tree survey should be reviewed for opportunities to preserve or relocate native tree species such as live oak, gumbo limbo, sabal palms, and sea grape.

The City may require mitigation for specimen trees and other native trees such as relocation (i.e., tree-spading to landscape buffer areas or to nearby preserves), tree replacement, or cash payment. Also in accordance with Land Development Regulations, all invasive exotic plant species occurring in the uplands must be eradicated during site development.

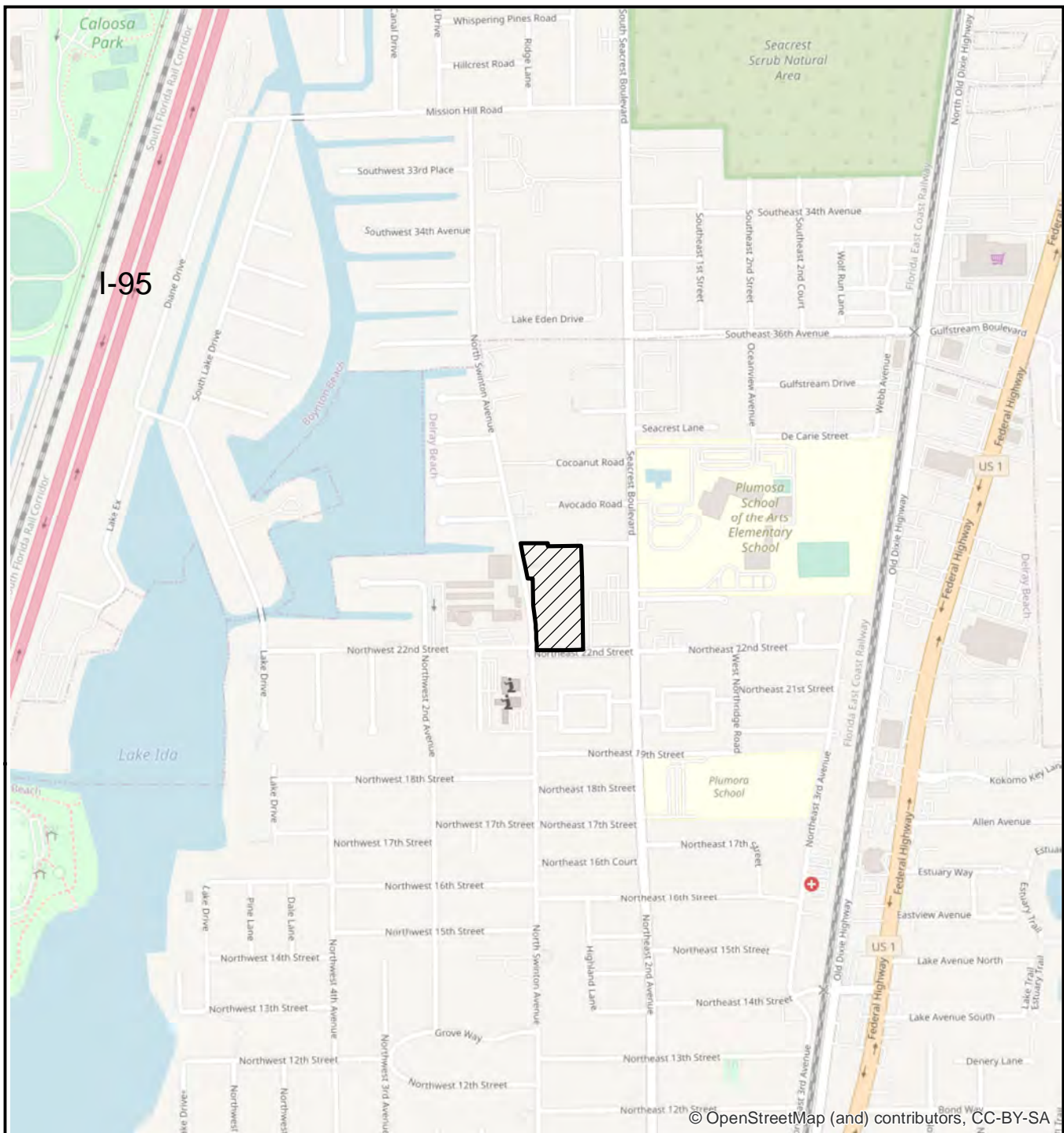
## **APPENDIX**

### Maps and Figures:


Figure 1: Location Map  
Figure 2: Quad Map  
Figure 3: Aerial Map  
Figure 4: FLUCFCS Map

### Attachment:

USDA Soils Report



## LEGEND

 - SITE (5.4+/- AC)

0 1,000 Feet

N

# DELRAY RIDGE LOCATION MAP



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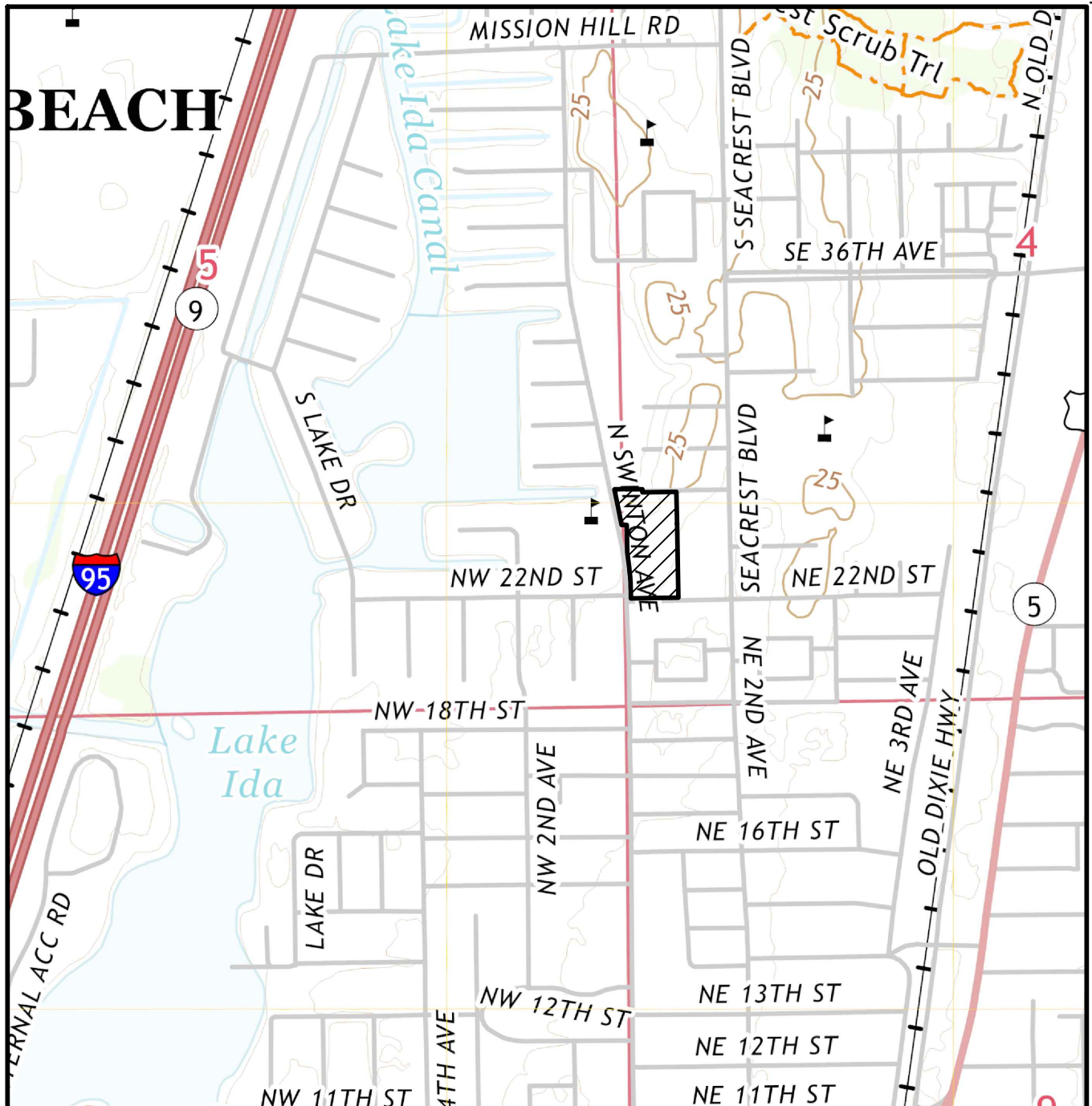
2581 METROCENTRE BLVD., SUITE 1  
WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33407  
561-291-7950 PHONE 561-530-4908 FAX  
WWW.EWCONSULTANTS.COM

**JUNE 2021**

**FIGURE**

**1**





USGS QUAD "DELRAY BEACH", SECTION 4, TOWNSHIP 46 SOUTH, RANGE 43 EAST, CITY OF DELRAY BEACH, PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA, LATITUDE 26°29'12" LONGITUDE -80°04'22"

### LEGEND

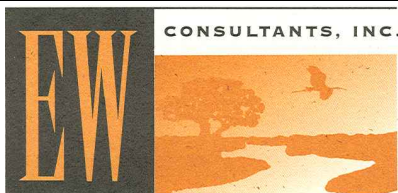
 - SITE (5.4± AC)

0 1000  
SCALE IN FEET



## DELRAY RIDGE QUAD

Delray Ridge.dwg QUAD



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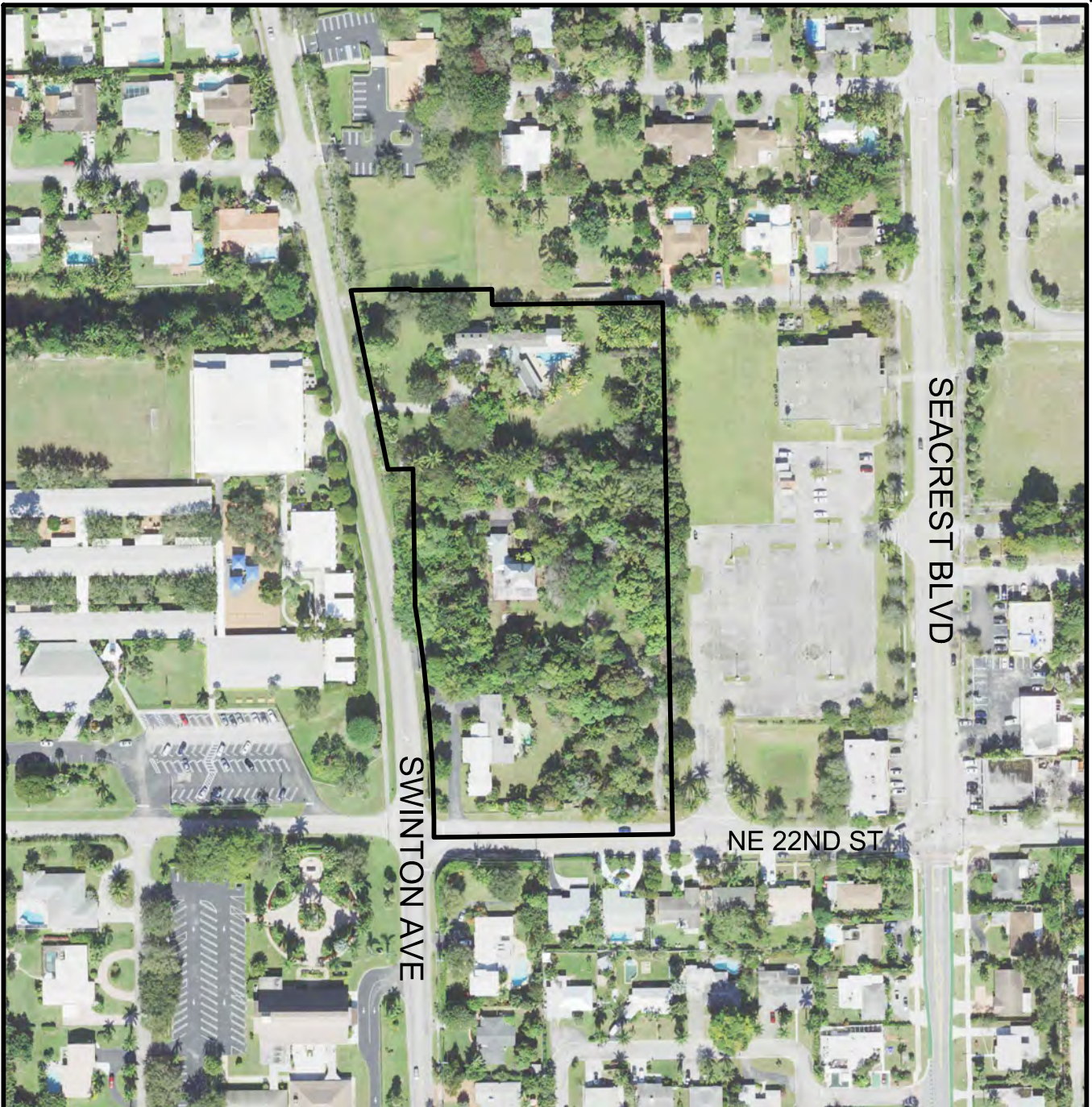
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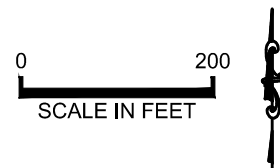
FIGURE

**2**





PALM BEACH COUNTY AERIAL DATED 2020



## DELRAY RIDGE AERIAL

Delray Ridge.dwg AERIAL



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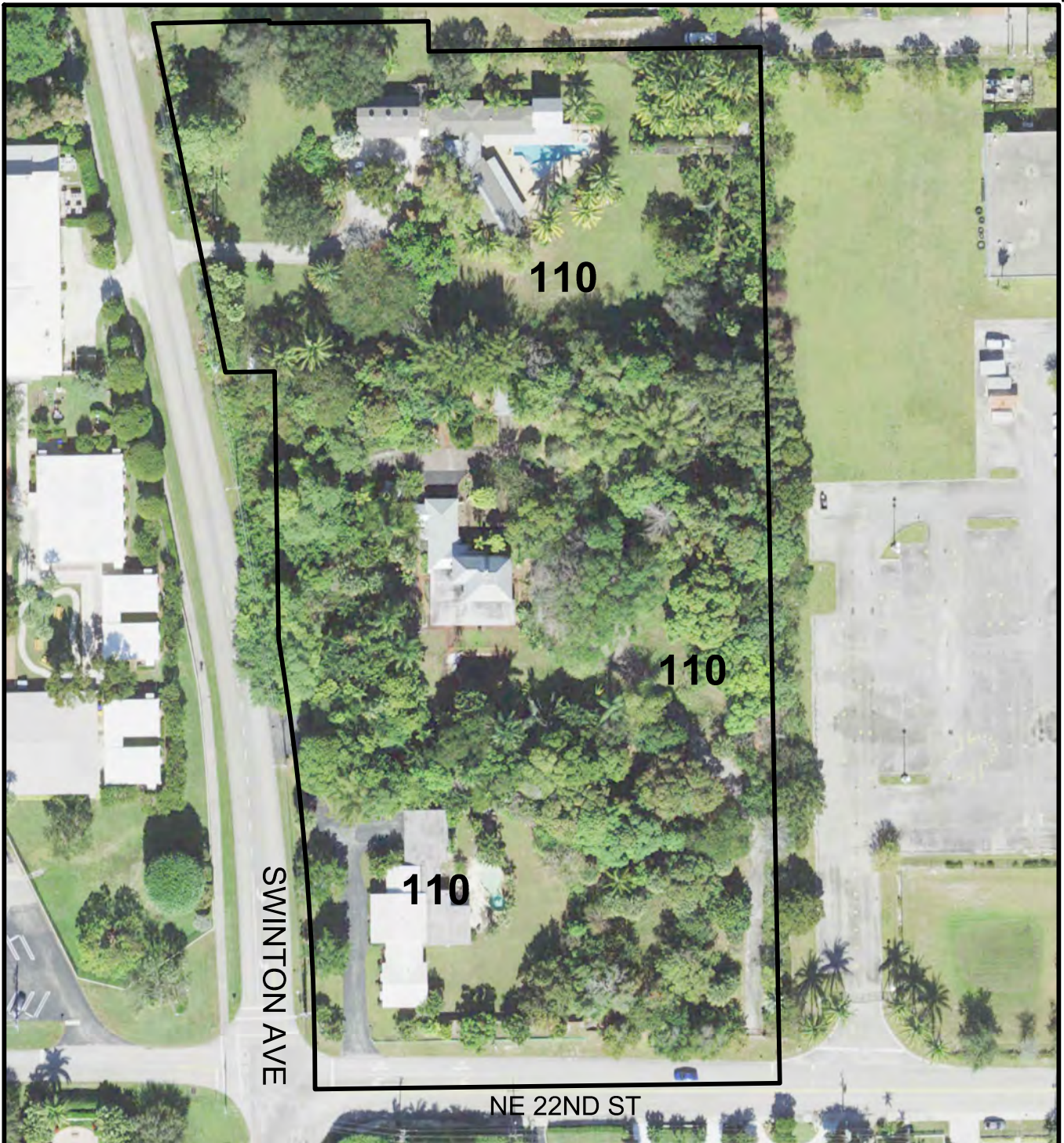
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**FIGURE**

**3**





PALM BEACH  
COUNTY AERIAL  
DATED 2020

LEGEND  
110 - RESIDENTIAL (5.4± AC)  
**DELRAY RIDGE**

0 200  
SCALE IN FEET



**FLUCFCS**

Delray Ridge.dwg FLUCFCS



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FIGURE

**4**



# Soil Map—Palm Beach County Area, Florida (Delray Ridge)



Soil Map—Palm Beach County Area, Florida  
(Delray Ridge)

## MAP LEGEND

### Area of Interest (AOI)

 Area of Interest (AOI)

### Soils

 Soil Map Unit Polygons

 Soil Map Unit Lines

 Soil Map Unit Points

### Special Point Features



Blowout



Borrow Pit



Clay Spot



Closed Depression



Gravel Pit



Gravelly Spot



Landfill



Lava Flow



Marsh or swamp



Mine or Quarry



Miscellaneous Water



Perennial Water



Rock Outcrop



Saline Spot



Sandy Spot



Severely Eroded Spot



Sinkhole



Slide or Slip



Sodic Spot



Spoil Area



Stony Spot



Very Stony Spot



Wet Spot



Other



Special Line Features

### Water Features



Streams and Canals

### Transportation



Rails



Interstate Highways



US Routes



Major Roads

### Background



Aerial Photography

## MAP INFORMATION

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:20,000.

Warning: Soil Map may not be valid at this scale.

Enlargement of maps beyond the scale of mapping can cause misunderstanding of the detail of mapping and accuracy of soil line placement. The maps do not show the small areas of contrasting soils that could have been shown at a more detailed scale.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Web Soil Survey URL:

Coordinate System: Web Mercator (EPSG:3857)

Maps from the Web Soil Survey are based on the Web Mercator projection, which preserves direction and shape but distorts distance and area. A projection that preserves area, such as the Albers equal-area conic projection, should be used if more accurate calculations of distance or area are required.

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Palm Beach County Area, Florida

Survey Area Data: Version 17, Jun 9, 2020

Soil map units are labeled (as space allows) for map scales 1:50,000 or larger.

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: Jan 7, 2020—Mar 26, 2020

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

## Map Unit Legend

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
41	St. Lucie-Paola-Urban land complex, 0 to 8 percent slopes	5.4	100.0%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>5.4</b>	<b>100.0%</b>