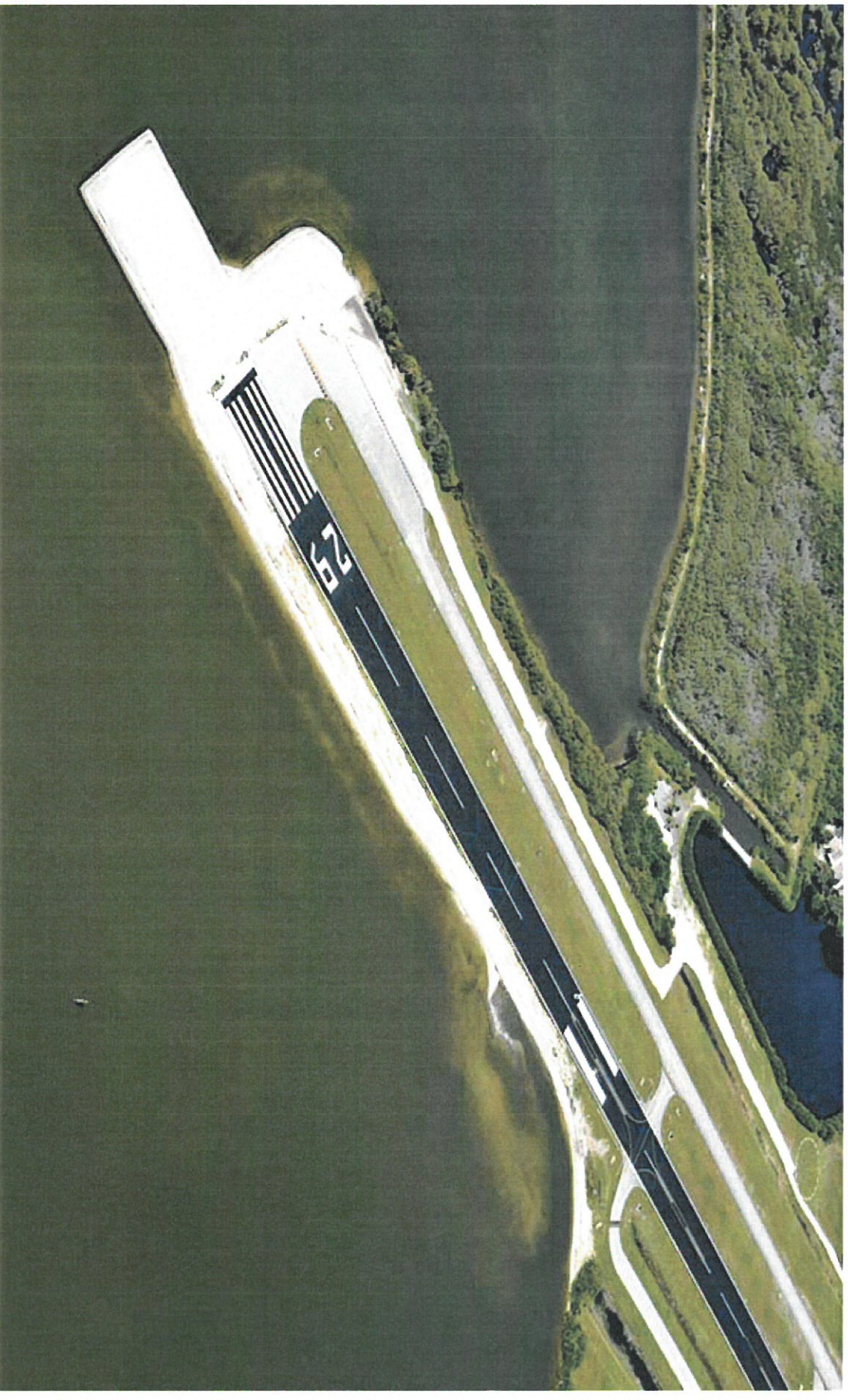


# ENR Southeast

ENR Southeast's 2017 Best Projects

**Airports/Transit: Merritt Island Airport Runway 11/29 Safety Area  
Improvements**



The Merritt Island Airport, a public general-aviation airport surrounded by the Banana River Aquatic Preserve, needed a 185-ft extension to its lone 3,601-ft-long runway.

*PHOTO BY AERO PHOTO SE12 ENRSoutheast*

*October 30, 2017*

**Merritt Island Airport Runway 11/29 Safety Area Improvements**  
Titusville, Fla.  
**Award of Merit**

**Owner:** Titusville Cocoa Airport Authority

**Lead Design Firm/Civil Engineer/Construction Manager:** Michael Baker International Inc.

**General Contractor:** Welsh Cos.

The Merritt Island Airport, a public general-aviation airport surrounded by the Banana River Aquatic Preserve, needed a 185-ft extension to its lone 3,601-ft-long runway.

The too-short runway had resulted in 34 reported incidents of airplanes rolling off into the river. Additionally, the runway's safety area was 185 ft short of the Federal Aviation Administration's standard design criteria.

The project team's challenge was to design and construct a resilient structure that minimized impacts to the river while filling, restoring and armoring the shoreline.

Looking for the most sustainable solution, Michael Baker International opted to utilize an open-cell articulating concrete block revetment with a lifespan of 75-plus years.

The project's mitigation plan included removal of four derelict vessels in the river; construction of a one-acre seagrass platform; enhancement and hydrological connection of a 23-acre, offsite mosquito impoundment wetland mitigation area; voluntary harvesting of seagrass that would have been impacted by the project; and partnering with a local university to utilize both mitigation areas as an outdoor classroom.

Crews placed native wetland plants along the shoreline of the safety area in order to provide enhanced stormwater runoff treatment.

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