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Via Electronic Submission

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Subject: Comment Letter on Permit Application SAJ-2026-00341 (Hyper Club, LLC
Proposed Motorsports Community)

Dear Ms. Gilbert and Mr. Williams:

On behalf of the Responsible Growth Management Coalition (RGMC), I am writing to express our strong opposition to the Clean Water Act Section 404 permit application SAJ-2026-00341 submitted by Hyper Club, LLC. The Responsible Growth Management Coalition (RGMC) was formed to protect Florida's promise of a beautiful climate and high quality of life from the reckless pressures of the development industry that endanger our region and threaten to destroy this dream. RGMC champions sustainable development and

smart growth linking infrastructure to community needs, minimizing environmental impact, and preserving public land. We accomplish this through informed public participation, education, innovation, and litigation. Working together, we can protect and restore SWFL's quality of life.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers must deny this permit because the proposed 543-acre luxury motorsports and residential development will cause severe, irreversible degradation to approximately 142 acres of critical wetlands within the fringe of the Greater Everglades ecosystem. The potential altering of these highly sensitive natural and restored wetlands directly undermines the massive, taxpayer-funded ecological investments made in the adjacent Picayune Strand State Forest restoration project and the survival of the native flora and fauna species and sub-species that are endemic to Southwest Florida.

This intense industrial and residential expansion will fragment indispensable habitat and the intact wetlands system and jeopardize native, federally protected wildlife—including the critically endangered Florida panther which relies on this sensitive buffer zone next to the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge. The location of this former test track is critical to the environmental integrity of this area of the Western Everglades. Official county land use maps and environmental assessments note that the facility is completely hemmed in by environmentally sensitive wetlands: Stumpy Strand flows immediately to the east of the test track in a north-to-south direction and connects directly into Lucky Lake Strand, which covers thousands of acres of protected cypress swamp and wet prairie stretching toward the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge and the Picayune Strand State Forest.

In addition, plopping a high-traffic residential/ motorsport resort at this location severely fragments wildlife connectivity to important preservation lands one of which was recently acquired by Conservation Collier--the 200-acre Gore Estate, which has well documented, regular panther sightings on the land as captured by the fStop Foundation trail cameras. The low vehicular traffic, high connectivity transit for panthers and black bears that presently exist in this remote fringe/transitional area between SE Golden Gate Estates and the Western Everglades--a known panther passage area, rich with high quality panther habitat--will be severely impacted if this development application is permitted.

We realize this site has been operating as a “proving ground” or test site for new model fossil fuel motor vehicles and motorcycles by the Ford and Harley-Davidson corporations for decades. However, while the applicant claims this project merely preserves a 40-year legacy of automotive use on the property, the proposed development represents an unprecedented and dangerous intensification of land use. Prior operations by the Ford Motor Company, Harley-Davidson, and Chrysler Group LLC utilized the site purely as a low-impact, secure, and fenced-in vehicle testing facility. Those corporate entities operated

within the footprint of the existing test track built in the 1980s and never sought a Section 404 permit to drain, fill, and systematically destroy 142 acres of wetlands. [1, 3, 4, 5]

The Hyper Club, LLC proposal is not a mere continuation of historical usage. Instead, it introduces a high-density footprint consisting of a redesigned racing circuit, massive stormwater management ponds, car storage facilities, up to 100 permanent residential estate lots, and short-stay luxury accommodations. Converting an isolated, low-occupancy corporate testing strip into a bustling luxury residential and commercial racing resort introduces permanent human activity, severe light pollution, and acoustic disruption to a sensitive ecosystem border.

Pollutant discharges will increase exponentially if the Hyper Club development plan is executed not only from vehicular sources but heavy application of fertilizers, pesticide, and herbicides. Rain will wash nitrogen and phosphorus from the developed properties into local retention ponds and storm systems, which then feed toxic blue-green algae growth downstream to adjacent natural freshwater bodies and sloughs. Residential landscaping, manicured lawns and common areas in gated subdivisions require heavy chemical treatments. When pesticides and herbicides wash downstream, they carry water-soluble active ingredients and their breakdown products (metabolites) into aquatic ecosystems. The most common chemicals found in agricultural and urban runoff include glyphosate, atrazine, and organophosphates. Therefore, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers must evaluate this application as a massive new development footprint rather than a harmless evolution of historic land use.

Environmental impacts of non-point source water pollution from motor vehicles and associated costs for water restoration are well documented in the U.S (note referenced excerpts below). Pollutants originating from the operation of motor vehicles and roadway maintenance are conveyed by stormwater runoff and include heavy metals, suspended solids, nutrients, and hydrocarbons among others. Additional motor vehicle trips at build out to and from the proposed Hyper Club development have, as yet, not been estimated by the applicant for daily two-way trips. Higher Trip Generation Rates are certainly anticipated due to the remote location of this development that will lack internal capture (the percentage of trips generated by a mixed-use development that start and end within the same site, reducing external roadway traffic). This will also greatly increase the risk of panther mortality by collision with a motor vehicle and impair the ability of these big cats to hunt, disperse and reproduce.

Furthermore, the applicant absolutely plans to expand and intensify the ‘test track’ usage of this site which was a former Ford and Harley Davidson new products testing grounds. A recent Naples Daily News Article on the Hyper Club furnished the following information:

In a statement, the project's developers — the Hyper Club LLC — emphasized that they are in the "early stages of design and planning for a proposed private, low-density motorsports lifestyle community that would **expand upon** an existing, automotive testing facility in eastern Collier County".

What the developer means by ‘expand upon’ leaves much to the imagination in terms of the intensity of the usage and how it will escalate automotive-related pollutant loading and intensify noise and light pollution, all of which amount to severe and likely impacts to fragile natural water bodies and native wildlife communities.

There is very little doubt that the proposed Hyper Club development would introduce a new, more intensive and inappropriate usage to this site that will directly affect the integrity and quality of the conservation lands and rural lands that surround it, creating a significant additional pollutant source and pollution loading to the highly sensitive and ecologically stressed Western Everglades landscape that surrounds it.

The applicant has failed to estimate or account for the inevitable spike in daily vehicle trip generation caused by this remote development, completely ignoring the lack of internal capture and the resulting influx of non-point source water pollution. Upgrading an isolated corporate test track into a high-intensity luxury motorsports resort will introduce a continuous stream of heavy metals, suspended solids, nutrients, and hydrocarbons into a highly sensitive, ecologically stressed landscape. To approve this severe intensification of land use would directly undermine billions of dollars of taxpayer-funded restoration work in the adjacent Picayune Strand and permanently degrade the surrounding Western Everglades.

The high likelihood of severe, unmitigated traffic, acoustic, light, automotive, and chemical impacts from this industrial and residential development to fragile water bodies and native wildlife habitats mandates that the Corps reject this inappropriate proposal in its entirety. For these reasons, we respectfully urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to use its best judgement and uphold its public interest review standards and deny Section 404 permit application SAJ-2026-00341. Given the immense impact and public concern surrounding this project, we also request that the Corps exercise its statutory obligations by hosting an in-person public hearing with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in attendance before any final decision is made.

Thank you for your time, careful consideration, and dedication to protecting our nation's critical aquatic and natural resources.

Respectfully Submitted,

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rgmc@hotmail.com

Bobbie Lee Davenport

Bobbie Lee Davenport, President

Patty Whitehead

Patty Whitehead, Secretary

Published excerpts on environmental impacts of non-point source water pollution from motor vehicles:

--Substantial evidence suggests that residues from the operation of motor vehicles contribute heavily to non-point source and groundwater pollution (Davis et al. 2001; Kayhanian et al. 2003).

--Pollutants from motor vehicles or from transportation infrastructure include sediments (from construction or erosion), oils and grease (from leaks or improperly discarded used oil), heavy metals (from car exhaust, worn tires and engine parts, brake pads, rust, or used antifreeze, road salts, as well as fertilizers, pesticide, and herbicides (used alongside roads or on adjacent land); (Hill and Horner 2005).

--EPA (1997) estimates that up to 1/2 of suspended solids and 1/6 of hydrocarbons reaching streams originate from freeways. Vehicle-related particulates in highway runoff come mostly from tire and pavement wear (~ 1/3 each), engine and brake wear (~ 20%), and exhaust (~ 8%) (EPA 1996).

--Heavy metals in highway stormwater runoff are of particular concern because of their toxicity, pervasiveness, and persistence. In an early study, Ellis et al. (1987) find that heavy metals can make highway runoff chronically toxic to receiving waters.

--Davis et al., (2001) reported that pollutant loads typically follow the pattern: Zn (20-5,000 µg/l) > Cu H Pb (5-200 µg/l) > Cd (< 12 µg/l). Their empirical study reveals that brake wear is the largest contributor to copper loading (47%) in urban runoff while tire wear contribute 25% of zinc loading, the second largest after buildings.

--Kayhanian et al. (2003) specifically study the impact of VMT on highway runoff pollutant concentrations. As expected, pollutant concentrations are higher (two to ten times) for urban than for non-urban highways.

--Highway stormwater runoff has also generated significant concerns for public health. Gaffield et al. (2003) examined the public health impacts from heavy metal in stormwater, which can often be traced to motor vehicle sources.

--According to Van Metre et al. (2000), vehicles are a significant source of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in water bodies.

--Driscoll et al. (1990) report detectable levels of zinc, lead, copper, and nitrate/nitrite in road runoff, with urban levels two to five times those of rural levels.

--Disc brakes, however, are open to the environment, so each time semi-metallic brake pads squeeze against the wheels' rotors, tiny amounts of metal dust, often copper but sometimes also zinc and lead, are deposited along the roadway and washed to water bodies by rain or snow (Nixon and Saphores 2007). Runoff from roads and parking lots has a high concentration of toxic metals, suspended solids, and hydrocarbons, which originate largely from automobiles. Highway runoff is toxic to many aquatic species.⁴ Table 5.15.3-1 shows pollution measured in roadway runoff (Bannerman et al. 1993).
From Bannerman et al. 1993

Table 5.15.3-1 Pollution Levels in Road Runoff Waters (micrograms per litre)⁵

Pollutant	Urban	Rural	Pollutant	Urban	Rural
Total suspended solids	142.0	41.0	Nitrate + Nitrite	0.76	0.46
Volatile suspended solids	39.0	12.0	Total copper	0.054	0.022
Total organic carbon	25.0	8.0	Total lead	0.400	0.080
Chemical oxygen demand	114.0	49.0	Total zinc	0.329	0.080