



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SAVANNAH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1104 N. WESTOVER BLVD, SUITE 9
ALBANY, GEORGIA 31707

MAY 15 2013

Regulatory Division
SAS-2013-00349

JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE
Savannah District/State of Georgia

The Savannah District has received an application for a Department of the Army Permit, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344), as follows:

Application Number: SAS-2013-00349

Applicant: Burns Wetherington
Georgia Power Company
75 Fifth Street, NW
Suite 175
Atlanta, Georgia, 30308

Agent: Wetland & Ecological Consultants, LLC
3225 S. Cherokee Lane, Building 800
Woodstock, Georgia 30188

Location of Proposed Work: The project site is located within a 54.57-acre forested parcel adjacent to Gamble Road west of Interstate Highway 516 in Savannah, Georgia (Latitude 32.0449, Longitude -81.1502). The parcel is bound to the south by an existing Georgia Power Right-Of-Way, to the east by an industrial area, and to the north and west by residential areas.

Description of Work Subject to the Jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: The construction of Georgia Power Gamble Road Substation. The proposed Gamble Road substation will have an adverse wetland impact associated with the filling of 8.98 acres of wetlands for the construction of the substation and 0.009 acre of wetlands in the proposed Right-Of-Way. Temporary clearing of an additional 0.84 acre of wetlands will be needed for substation construction; however, due to the proximity to existing Right-Of-Way needed for electricity ingress/egress for the substation, the project will require non-invasive (i.e., non-mechanized) clearing of 3.83 acres of wetlands for the proposed Right-Of-Way. In summary, the Gamble Road substation and associated Right-Of-Way will require a total of 9.82 acres of wetland impact for the substation construction and 3.83 acres of wetland impact for the Right-Of-Way construction (i.e., support structures and non-mechanized land clearing).

BACKGROUND

This Joint Public Notice announces a request for authorizations from both the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Georgia. The applicant's proposed work may also require local governmental approval.

STATE OF GEORGIA

Water Quality Certification: The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, intends to certify this project at the end of 30 days in accordance with the provisions of Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, which is required for a Federal Permit to conduct activity in, on, or adjacent to the waters of the State of Georgia. Copies of the application and supporting documents relative to a specific application will be available for review and copying at the office of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, Water Protection Branch, 4220 International Parkway, Suite 101, Atlanta, Georgia 30354, during regular office hours. A copier machine is available for public use at a charge of 25 cents per page. Any person who desires to comment, object, or request a public hearing relative to State Water Quality Certification must do so within 30 days of the State's receipt of application in writing and state the reasons or basis of objections or request for a hearing. The application can be reviewed in the Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Division, 1104 N. Westover Blvd, Suite 9, Albany, Georgia 31707.

State-owned Property and Resources: The applicant may also require assent from the State of Georgia, which may be in the form of a license, easement, lease, permit or other appropriate instrument.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

The Savannah District must consider the purpose and the impacts of the applicant's proposed work, prior to a decision on issuance of a Department of the Army Permit.

Cultural Resources Assessment: Brockington & Associates (Brockington) conducted a Phase I cultural resources survey of the project site, for the applicant, during May 2011. The literature research for the project area revealed no known National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listed historic resources, and only one archeological site located within one mile of the project site.

Based on the results of the Phase I field survey, five historic structures are located adjacent to the project site, two of which are considered potentially eligible for the NRHP by Brockington. Further, the Phase I survey identified two new archeological sites and one isolated find; the archeological sites are recommended ineligible for the NRHP by Brockington. Based on the location of the historic structures outside of the project area and the presence of vegetated buffers that will be maintained following substation construction (i.e., protected viewshed), the proposed substation project is not anticipated to adversely affect the historic structures. No further archeological surveys are recommended by Brockington.

Endangered Species: Pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), we request information from the US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Department of Commerce, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the National Marine Fisheries Service; or, any other interested party, on whether any species listed or proposed for listing may be present in the area.

A review was conducted, by the applicant's agent, of information available from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GDNR) and the USFWS concerning the potential occurrence of federally threatened and endangered species on the project site. Based on the results of this review, 13 federally protected species are known to occur in Chatham County and the surrounding Georgia counties of Effingham, Bryan, and Liberty. A protected species survey was conducted, by the applicant's agent, within the project site's boundaries on September 13, 2009, to determine the occurrence or potential occurrence of the federally listed species. Based on the results of the protected species survey, the project site contains potential habitat for wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) and pondberry (*Lindera melissifolia*); however, no individuals of either species were observed within the project area. Of the remaining protected species, no individuals or their preferred habitat were observed. Therefore, based on the field surveys conducted by the applicant's agent, no impacts to protected species are anticipated from the proposed Gamble Road Substation construction.

Public Interest Review: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

Consideration of Public Comments: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Native American Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Application of Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines: The proposed activity involves the discharge of dredged or fill material into the waters of the United States. The Savannah District's evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, under the authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act.

Public Hearing: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application for a Department of the Army Permit. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for requesting a public hearing. The decision whether to hold a public hearing is at the discretion of the District Engineer, or his designated appointee, based on the need for additional substantial information necessary in evaluating the proposed project.

Comment Period: Anyone wishing to comment on this application for a Department of the Army Permit should submit comments in writing to the Commander, Savannah District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Attention: Alan J. Miller, 1104 N. Westover Blvd, Suite 9, Albany, Georgia 31707; no later than 30 days from the date of this notice. Please refer to the applicant's name and the application number in your comments.

If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please contact Alan J. Miller, Project Manager, Coastal Branch at 229-430-8566.

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1. Site Location Map
2. Wetland Map



Wildwood Drive

Garrard Avenue

GPC ROW




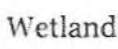
GPC ROW

Gamble Road

GPC ROW

Veteran's Parkway

Legend

-  Site A
-  Approximate Gamble Road Substation Project Limits
-  Boulevard-Dean Forest TL
-  Wetland



Base Map Source: USDA National Agriculture Imagery Program: Chatham County, Georgia 2009.

Gamble Road Substation
Chatham County, Georgia








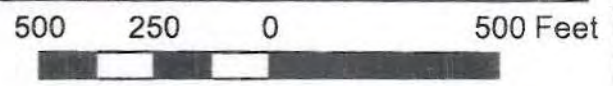
**WETLAND & ECOLOGICAL
CONSULTANTS, LLC**
Woodstock, Georgia

Figure 8
Existing Site Conditions
Ends 1



Legend

-  Site A
-  Approximate Gamble Road Substation Project Limits
-  Wetland
-  Data Point
-  Photograph



Base Map Source: USDA National Agriculture Imagery Program: Chatham County, Georgia 2009.

Gamble Road Substation
Chatham County, Georgia



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Figure 10
Jurisdictional Waters
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