



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
SAVANNAH DISTRICT
100 WEST OGLETHORPE AVENUE
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401-3604

May 2, 2022

Regulatory Division
SAS-2022-00128

**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 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. § 403) and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1344), as follows:

Application Number: SAS-2022-00128

Applicant: Mr. Christopher Novack
Georgia Ports Authority
Post Office Box 2406
Savannah, Georgia 31402

Agent: Mr. Brandon Wall
Sligh Environmental Consultants, Inc. (SECI)
31 Park of Commerce Way, Suite 200B
Savannah, Georgia 31405

Project Purpose as Proposed by Applicant: The applicant's stated project purpose is "to improve container capacity in Savannah".

Location of Proposed Work: The project site is located at the Savannah River International Trade Park (SRITP), 1.3 miles east of US Highway 21, approximately two miles southeast of I-95, in Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia (Latitude 32.1735, Longitude -81.1640).

Description of Work Subject to the Jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:
To impact aquatic resources associated with the expansion of the SRITP. Specifically, the project would fill of 0.489 acre of freshwater wetland and 0.456 acre of freshwater tidal wetland as well as temporarily impact 0.179 acre of freshwater tidal wetland associated with the construction of a road crossing. As proposed, the applicant would extend Little Hearst Parkway, which is the main thoroughfare through the SRITP. The proposed road extension would consist of two 15' wide travel lanes with a 12' median. A 12' shoulder would be constructed on each side. To maintain hydrologic

connectivity, a 137' long 8'x8' box culvert would be installed within the road. The overall development would include an inbound and outbound truck gate, a centralized container storage yard, perimeter roadways, security, and stormwater management ponds.

The applicant contends that the proposed project would help alleviate congestion on the terminal due to high volume growth and disruption/delays in the logistics chain and would allow the applicant to store containers off-terminal where they can be picked up and dropped off by cargo owners.

To offset the loss in aquatic function associated with the above freshwater impacts, the applicant has proposed the purchase of 6.8 wetland credits from the AA Shaw Mitigation Bank. To offset the loss in aquatic function associated with the tidal impacts, the applicant has proposed the purchase of 4.7 freshwater tidal wetland credits from Vallambrosa. The project is hydrologically connected to the Black Creek.

BACKGROUND

The project site is an undeveloped 185.6-acre portion of land owned by the applicant in the SRITP. The site is accessed by Little Hearst Parkway. SECI completed a wetland delineation of the site in February 2021 followed by a GPS mapping of the wetlands in November 2021. According to SECI, the 185.6-acre delineation area contains 40.62 acres of contiguous freshwater bottom land wetland, 0.13 acre of isolated depressional wetland, and 1.61 acres of freshwater tidal (emergent) wetland. The remaining 143.24 acres consist of pine plantation, mixed pine/hardwood upland forest, and mixed hardwood upland. The forested wetland is dominated by swamp tupelo, willow oak, sweetgum, bald cypress, and other freshwater bottom land species. The tidal wetland is dominated by wild rice, cattail, and smartweed with scattered swamp tupelo and bald cypress. No saltwater species are present. Habitats are typical for the Coastal Plain region of Georgia.

The project site was originally delineated in 1997 as part of a larger tract and verified by the Corps under Regulatory Number 970000130. In 2002, the applicant placed restrictive covenants on a portion of the wetlands as mitigation for other GPA permits (Permit 970018091 and 200014590). The covenants were recorded in the Chatham County Courthouse on December 9, 2002. An exhibit is attached that shows the limits of preserved wetland, and the proposed project will not impact any preserved wetland.

On July 5, 2013, the Corps issued DA permit SAS-2009-01271 authorizing the fill of 4.65 acres of jurisdictional wetland and 1.81 acres of isolated wetland for the expansion of the SRITP. The permit expired on June 30, 2018, and was subsequently extended till June 30, 2023. According to the agent, all impacts associated with this permit action have been completed. In conjunction with this evaluation, the Corps is currently processing an Approved Jurisdictional Determination for the 0.13-acre of wetland.

This Joint Public Notice announces a request for authorizations from both the Corps 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 will review the proposed project for Water Quality Certification, in accordance with the provisions of Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. The applicant has yet to request a Water Quality Certification from the State of Georgia. Prior to issuance of a Department of the Army Permit for a project located in, on, or adjacent to the waters of the State of Georgia, review for Water Quality Certification in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act is required. A reasonable period of time, which shall not exceed one year, is established under the Clean Water Act for the State to act on a request for Water Quality Certification, after which, issuance of such a Department of the Army Permit may proceed. This public notice serves as notification to the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) pursuant to section 401(a)(2) of the Clean Water Act for neighboring jurisdiction review and begins the 30-day clock for USEPA to notify affected states.

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.

Marshland Protection: This notice also serves as notification of a request to alter coastal marshlands (under the provision of the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act, Georgia Laws, 1970, p. 939 and as amended), if required. Comments concerning this action should be submitted to the Marsh and Shore Management Section, Coastal Resources Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1 Conservation Way, Brunswick, Georgia 31523-8600 (Telephone 912-264-7218).

Georgia Coastal Management Program: Prior to the Savannah District Corps of Engineers making a final permit decision on this application, the project must be certified by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Resources Division, to be consistent with applicable provisions of the State of Georgia Coastal Management Program (15 CFR 930). Anyone wishing to comment on Coastal Management Program certification of this project should submit comments in writing within 30 days of the date of this notice to the Federal Consistency Coordinator, Coastal Management Program, Coastal Resources Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, One Conservation Way, Brunswick, Georgia 31523-8600 (Telephone 912-264-7218).

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: Based on previous surveys within the SRITP, cultural resources are known to occur in the area. The applicant has submitted a Phase I cultural resource assessment that is currently under review by the Corps.

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH): This notice initiates the EFH consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The applicant's proposal may result in the destruction or alteration of EFH utilized by various life stages of species comprising the red drum, shrimp, bluefish or snapper grouper management complexes. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have an individual or cumulatively substantial adverse impact on EFH or federally managed fisheries in the Atlantic Ocean. Our final determination relative to project impacts to EFH and the need for mitigation measures are subject to review by and coordination with the NMFS and the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council.

Endangered Species: A preliminary review the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) list of Endangered and Threatened Species (IPaC) indicates the following listed species may occur in the project area: Eastern black rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*); wood stork (*Mycteria americana*); Eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*); gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*); frosted flatwoods salamander (*Ambystoma cingulatum*); the Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) and pondberry (*Lindera melissifolia*).

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 U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service; or, any other interested party, on whether any species listed or proposed for listing may be present in the area. In addition, we are requesting information from the USFWS whether the project is within 2,500 feet of an active wood stork nesting colony.

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 Corps 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 Corps 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 by email to sarah.e.wise@usace.army.mil. Alternatively, you may submit comments in writing to the Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, Attention: Mrs. Sarah Wise, 100 West Oglethorpe Avenue, Savannah, Georgia 31401, 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.

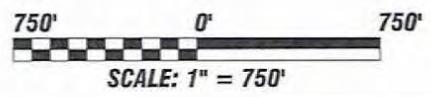
If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please contact Mrs. Sarah Wise, Team Lead, Coastal Branch at 912-652-5550.

Enclosures:

1. Savannah River International Trade Park, Georgia Ports Authority, Savannah, Georgia 31407, dated December 14, 2021, (Sheets 1-4).
2. Preservation Area Exhibit, SRITP Container Depot, Chatham County, Georgia, dated November 18, 2021.



LEGEND	
	PROJECT BOUNDARY - 89.318 ACRES (APPROX.)
	WETLANDS TOTAL (42.225 ACRES)
	PAVEMENT AREA (70.464 ACRES)
	STORMWATER PONDS
	BERM
	WETLAND FILL IMPACT (0.945 ACRES)
	WETLAND DISTURBANCE (0.679 ACRES)
	RESTRICTIVE COVENANT
	PROPOSED CULVERTS



PLAN VIEW

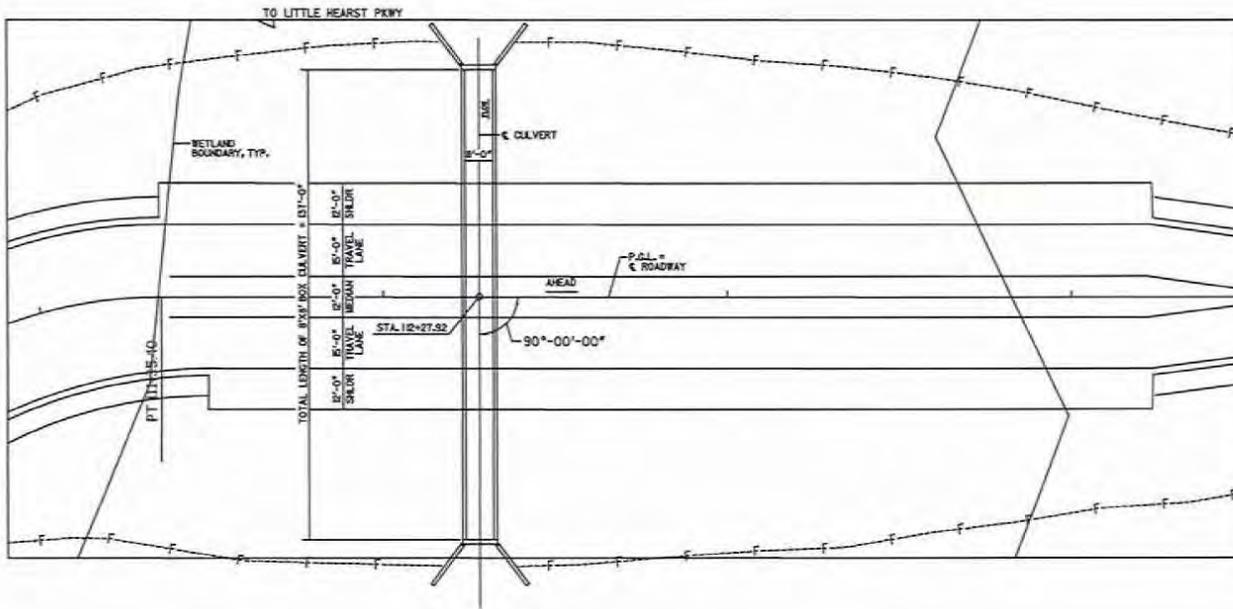
PROPOSED ACTIVITY: CONTAINER DEPOT AND ACCESS ROADWAY DEVELOPMENT
DATUM: NAD 1983 GEORGIA STATE PLANE EAST FIPS
NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

PROPOSED SITE CONDITION

SAVANNAH RIVER INTERNATIONAL TRADE PARK
GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31407

CONTAINER DEPOT

COUNTY OF: CHATHAM STATE: GEORGIA
 APPLICATION BY: GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY
 SHEET 2 of 4 DATE: DECEMBER 14, 2021

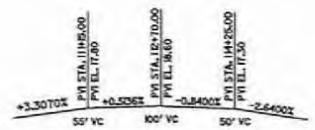


PROPOSED BRIDGE CONSISTS OF
 1 - 137'-0" 8' X 8' CONCRETE BOX CULVERT - 6A, STD. 2401

TRAFFIC DATA

TRAFFIC	ADT # XXX (2024)
DESIGN SPEED	ADT # XXX (2044)
24 HR TRUCKS	15 MPH
TRUCKS	XXX

UTILITIES
 NO UTILITIES ON BRIDGE



PROPOSED VERTICAL CURVE DATA

PLAN VIEW

NOT TO SCALE

PROPOSED ACTIVITY: CONTAINER DEPOT AND ACCESS ROADWAY DEVELOPMENT

DATUM: NAD 1983 GEORGIA STATE PLANE EAST FIPS

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

PROPOSED ROAD

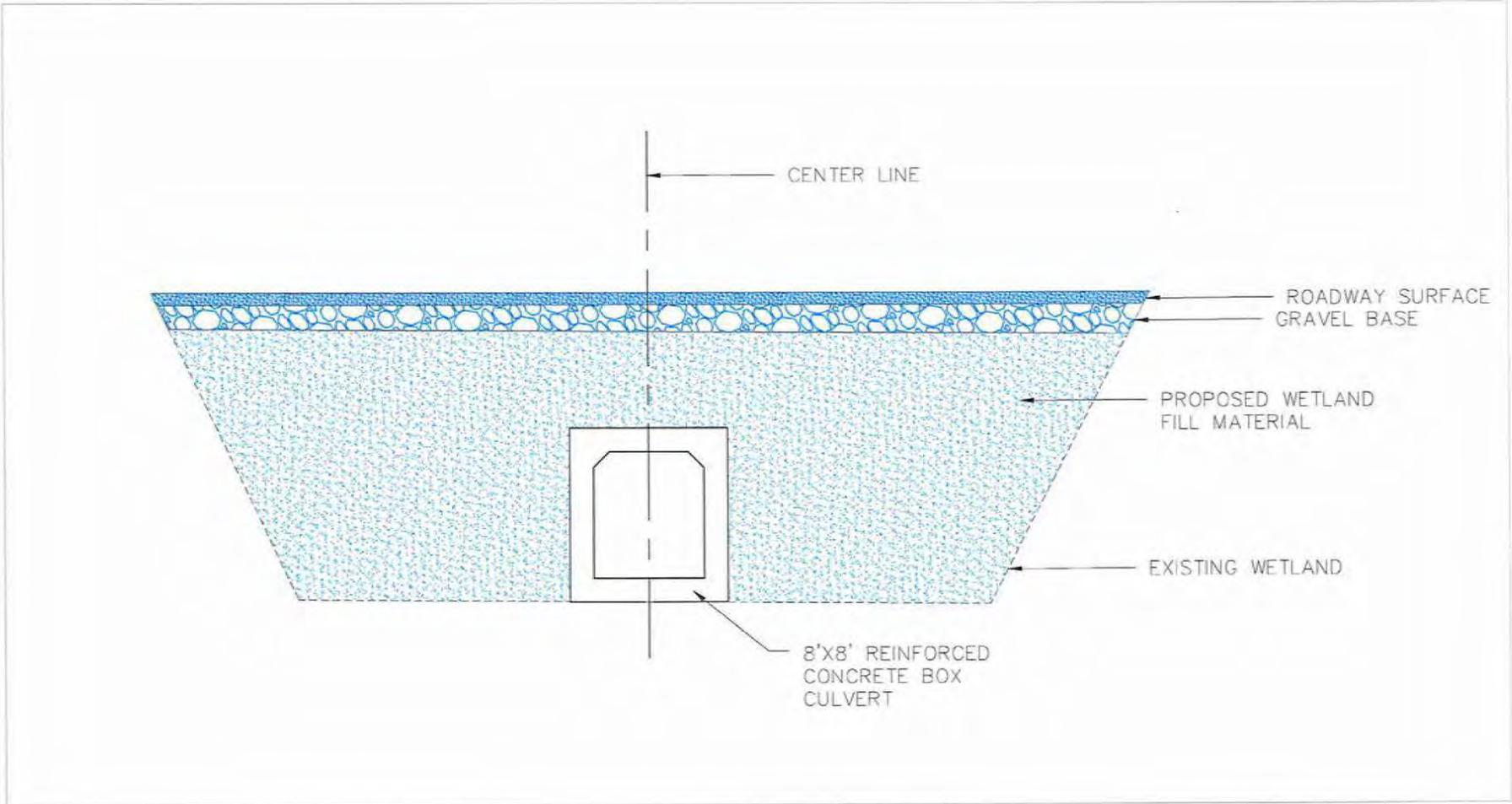
**SAVANNAH RIVER INTERNATIONAL TRADE PARK
 GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY
 SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31407**

CONTAINER DEPOT

**COUNTY OF: CHATHAM STATE: GEORGIA
 APPLICATION BY: GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY**

SHEET 3 of 4

DATE: DECEMBER 14, 2021



CROSS SECTION VIEW

NOT TO SCALE

PROPOSED ACTIVITY: CONTAINER DEPOT AND ACCESS ROADWAY DEVELOPMENT

DATUM: NAD 1983 GEORGIA STATE PLANE EAST FIPS

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

TYPICAL ROAD & CULVERT CROSS SECTION

**SAVANNAH RIVER INTERNATIONAL TRADE PARK
 GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY
 SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31407**

CONTAINER DEPOT

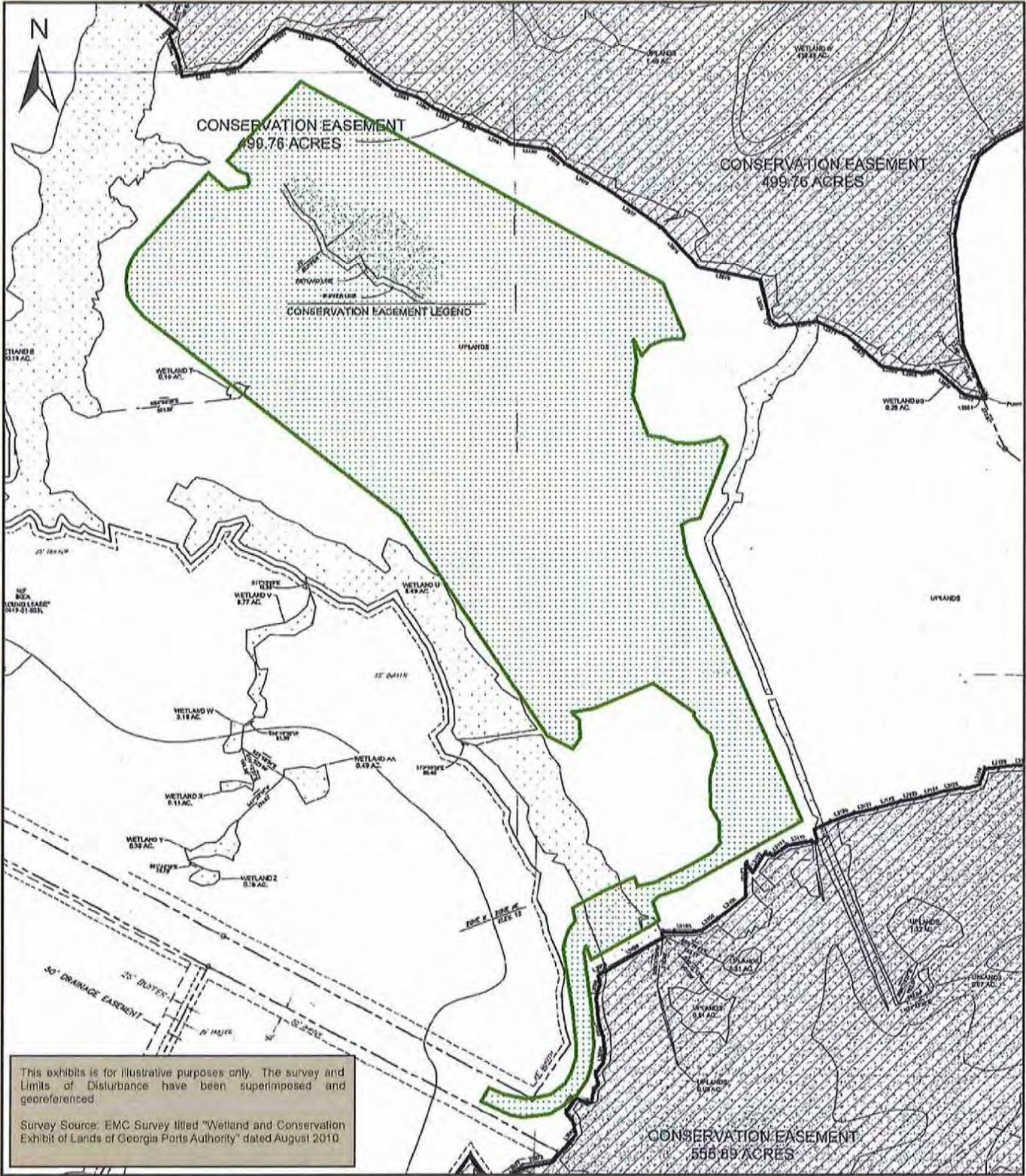
COUNTY OF: CHATHAM

STATE: GEORGIA

APPLICATION BY: GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY

SHEET 4 of 4

DATE: DECEMBER 14, 2021



This exhibit is for illustrative purposes only. The survey and Limits of Disturbance have been superimposed and georeferenced.

Survey Source: EMC Survey titled "Wetland and Conservation Exhibit of Lands of Georgia Ports Authority" dated August 2010.

	Approximate Limits of Disturbance		Approximate Preservation Area
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Prepared By:
sligh environmental consultants, inc.
 31 Park of Commerce Way, Suite 200B
 Savannah, Georgia 31405
 phone (912) 232-0451
 fax (912) 232-0453

Preservation Area Exhibit
 SRITP Container Depot
 Chatham County, Georgia

600
 Feet

Exhibit Date: November 18, 2021

Drawn By: TCT

Reviewed By: BWB

Job Number : 01-21-018