

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY SAVANNAH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS 100 W. OGLETHORPE AVENUE SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401-3640

October 27, 2016

Regulatory Division SAS-2010-00734

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-2015-00734

Applicant: Mr. Eric Duff

State Environmental Administrator Georgia Department of Transportation Office of Environmental Services

Office of Environmental Services

One Georgia Center, 16th Floor, 600 W. Peachtree Street, NW

Atlanta, Georgia 30308-3607

<u>Location of Proposed Work</u>: The project site is located on the CR 787/Islands Expressway as it crosses the Wilmington River (Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway), in Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia (Latitude 32.0617, Longitude -81.0283).

Description of Work Subject to the Jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: The proposed project would consist of the construction of two new high level, fixed-span, multi-lane bridges over the Wilmington River, which is part of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway. The proposed project would replace the existing, functionally obsolete double bascule bridges located approximately 0.33 mile east of the City of Savannah, Georgia. The project would begin at a point approximately 0.60 mile west of the Wilmington River and extend eastward to a point approximately 0.51 mile east of the Wilmington River. East of the Wilmington River crossing, CR 787/Islands Expressway merges with U.S. Route (US) 80/State Route (SR) 26, which provides direct access to Tybee Island. The total project is approximately 1.11 miles long.

The existing roadway consists of four 12-foot wide travel lanes, two in each direction, separated by a 30-foot wide depressed median. The functional classification of the roadway is Urban Principal Arterial. The existing right-of-way (ROW) width varies from 100 to 600 feet. The proposed ROW width varies from 190 feet to 680 feet within the project corridor. The project termini occur where the new bridges can appropriately tie into the existing CR 787/Islands Expressway.

The project would require 5.675 acres of impacts to waters of the United States (0.912 acre of permanent impacts and 4.763 acres of temporary impacts). Compensatory mitigation for the permanent and temporary impacts would be provided by the purchase of 43.08 tidal wetland credits (43.05 saltwater and 0.03 freshwater). The credits would be purchased from the Salt Creek Mitigation Bank, which is a Corps approved mitigation bank servicing the project area. The project design also includes excavation of the upland area beneath the existing bridges to meet the adjacent salt marsh elevations in order to restore the tidal flow in that area.

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, Watershed Protection Branch, 2 MLK Jr. Drive, Suite 418, Atlanta, Georgia 30334, during regular office hours. A copier machine is available for public use at a charge of 10 cents per page. All coastal projects are filed at our Brunswick office and will need to be requested from Georgia EPD. 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, 100 W. Oglethorpe Avenue, Savannah, Georgia 31401-3640.

<u>State-owned Property and Resources</u>: 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>Marshland Protection</u>: 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 Ecological Services Section, Coastal Resources

Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, One 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, Ecological Services Section, 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.

<u>Cultural Resources Assessment</u>: No historic properties listed in or considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) were located within the area of potential effect (APE) for this undertaking. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred with these findings in a letter dated June 3, 2011. One archaeological site, 9CH759 (Fort Bartow), was identified within the APE. This resource is a Civil War period earthwork remnant and is recommended eligible for listing on the NRHP. Four submerged cultural resources were also identified within the project study area; it was recommended that these resources be protected by buffers. The SHPO concurred with the archaeological and submerged resource findings in a letter dated October 17, 2012.

<u>Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)</u>: This notice initiates the EFH consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The applicant's proposal would result in the destruction or alteration of EFH utilized by various life stages of species comprising the 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.

<u>Endangered Species</u>: County lists of protected species maintained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division (GDNR-WRD) were reviewed. Project implementation would have **no effect** on the following federally protected species: frosted flatwoods

salamander (*Ambystoma cingulatum*), red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*), loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*), northern Atlantic right whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*), gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*), Kemp's Ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), pond spicebush (*Lindera melissifolia*),striped newt (*Notophthalmus perstriatus*), and red-cockaded woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*).

Project implementation **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the federally protected wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) and the federally protected West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued the biological effect determination for these two species and requested concurrence from USFWS in an email dated March 25, 2013. The USFWS responded in an April 11, 2013, letter stating that the agency concurred with FHWA's biological effect determinations for both the wood stork and the West Indian manatee. Project implementation **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the federally protected shortnose sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*) and the federally protected Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*). The FHWA issued the biological effect determinations for these two species, and requested concurrence from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in a March 26, 2013 letter. The NMFS responded in a letter dated December 20, 2013 stating that the agency concurred with the biological effect determinations for both the shortnose sturgeon and the Atlantic sturgeon.

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 additional species listed or proposed for listing may be present in the area.

<u>Public Interest Review</u>: 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.

<u>Application of Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines</u>: 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.

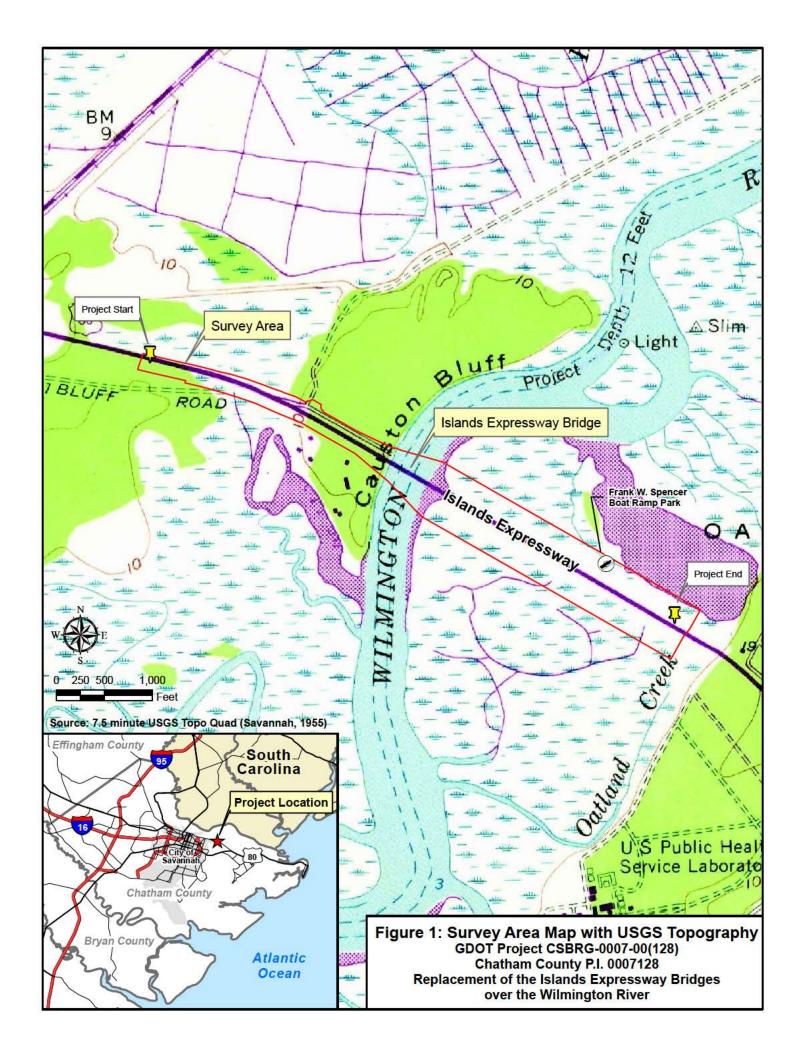
<u>Public Hearing</u>: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application for a Department of the Army permit. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for requesting a public 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.

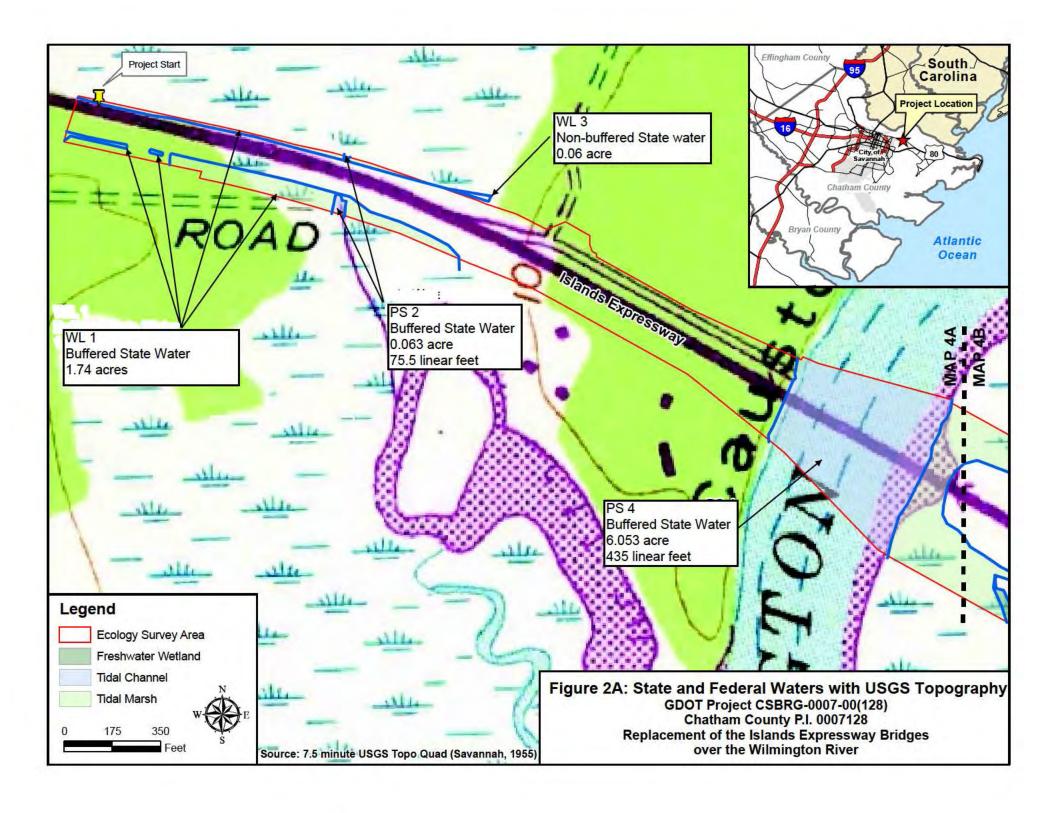
<u>Comment Period</u>: Anyone wishing to comment on this application for a Department of the Army Permit should submit comments in writing to the Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, Attention: Mr. Brian Moore, 100 W. Oglethorpe Avenue, Savannah, Georgia 31401-3640, no later than 30 days from the date of this notice. Please refer to the applicant's name and the application number in your comments.

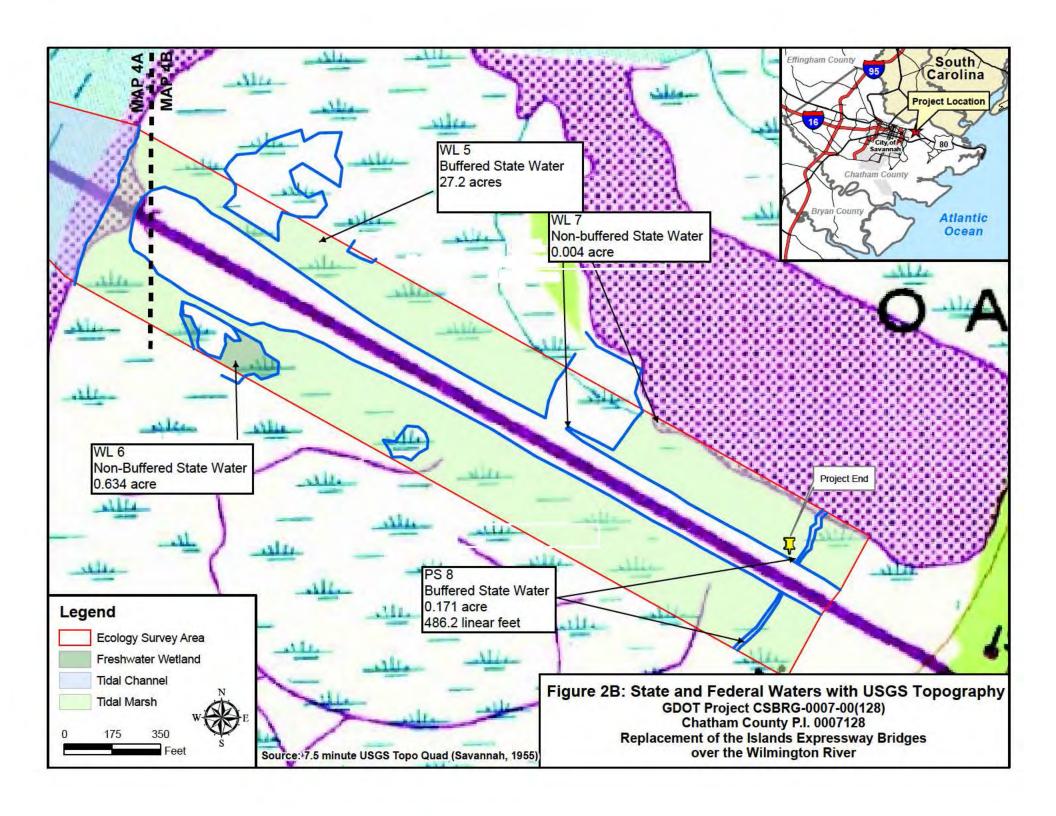
If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please contact Mr. Brian Moore, Project Manager, Coastal Branch at 912-652-5349.

Enclosures

- 1. Survey Area Map with USGS Topography (Figure 1)
- 2. State and Federal Waters with USGS Topography (Figure 2A and 2B))
- 3. CR 787/Islands Expressway Plan and Profile Sheets (18 Pages)







1/2 WILE

DESIGN DATA:	ISLANDS EXPRESSWAY			
TRAFFIC AD.T .: 2019	22,000			
TRAFFIC AD.T .: 2039	26,900			
TRAFFIC D.H.V.:	2,295			
DIRECTIONAL DIST:	60/40			
% TRUCKS:	2%			
24 HR.TRUCKS %:	3.5%			
SPEED DESIGN:	55 MPH			

FUNCTIONAL CLASS: ISLANDS EXPRESSWAY -URBAN PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL

THIS PROJECT IS 100% IN CHATHAM COUNTY AND IS 100% IN CONG. DIST. NO. 1.

LOCATION AND DESIGN APPROVAL DATE: 6/19/2015

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN PREPARED USING THE HORIZONTAL GEORGIA COORDINATE SYSTEM OF 1984 (NAD 19831/94 EAST ZONE, AND THE WORTH AMERICAN VERTICAL DATUM (NAVD)

> P.J.NO.0007128 CHATHAM COUNTY

WID-POINT COORDINATES

WETLAND I BUFFER

STREAM 2 RIFFER

WETLAND I

STREAM 2 BUFFER

STREAM &

STREAM 2

STA. 42+12.50 N 751791.0376 E 1008559.1640

BEGIN PROJECT CSBRG-0007-00(128)

STA 13.00.00

N 752927, 0090

E 1005896, 5392

W.P. - 3.78

ISLANDS EXPRESSWAY

THE DATA, TOGETHER WITH ALL OTHER INFORMATION SHOWN ON THESE PLANS OR IN ANYWAY INDICATED THEREBY. WHETHER BY DRAWINGS OR NOTES. OR IN ANY OTHER MANNER. ARE BASED UPON FIELD INVESTIGATIONS AND ARE BELIEVED TO BE INDICATIVE OF ACTUAL CONDITIONS. HOWEVER. THE SAME ARE SHOWN AS INFORMATION ONLY, ARE NOT GUARANTEED, AND DO NOT BIND THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IN ANY WAY. THE ATTENTION OF BIDDER IS SPECIFICALLY DIRECTED TO SUBSECTIONS 102.04, 102.05, AND 104.03 OF THE SPECIFICATIONS.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATE OF GEORGIA

PLAN AND PROFILE OF PROPOSED CR 787/ISLANDS EXPRESSWAY OVER THE WILMINGTON RIVER

> FEDERAL AID PROJECT CSBRG-0007-00(128) CHATHAM COUNTY

> > FEDERAL ROUTE * N/A STATE ROUTE *

METLAND 5 BUFFER

LENGTH OF PROJECT

CSBRG-0007-00(128)

NET LENGTH OF ROADWAY NET LENGTH OF BRIDGES

NET LENGTH OF PROJECT

NET LENGTH OF EXCEPTIONS

GROSS LENGTH OF PROJECT

PJ.NO. 0007128

END PROJECT

ISLANDS EXPRESSWAY STA 71+25, 00 N 750345, 9448

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CHATHAM COUNTY

MILES

0.730 0.373 1.103

0.000

No. 051

- BUFFER OF LIVE OAK

ALL REFERENCES IN THIS DOCUMENT.WHICH INCLUDES ALL PAPERS,WRITINGS, DOCUMENTS,DRAWINGS,OR PHOTOGRAPHS USED,OR TO BE USED IN CONNECTION WITH THIS DOCUMENT.TO 'STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA', STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT "GEORGIA STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT "," HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT '.OR 'DEPARTMENT 'WHEN THE CONTEXT THEREOF MEANS THE STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT OF GEORGIA AND SHALL BE DEEMED TO MEAN THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

PROJECT MUMBER

CSBRG-0007-0011281

SHEET NO. | TOTAL SHEETS

PREPARED BY:

MICHAEL BAKER INTERNATIONAL, INC.

DESIGN

RECOMMENDED FOR SUBMISSION BY:

SCOTT MANN

PROJECT MANAGER

SUBMITTED BY:

ALBERT SHELBY

STATE PROGRAM DELIVERY ENGINEER

Michael Baker INTERNATIONAL DATE CHIEF ENGINEER PLANS COMPLETED

01-00

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		CONSTRUCTION PLANS						
	01-001	COVER SHEET						
	02-001 13-001 TO 13-014	INDEX MAINLINE ROADWAY PLAN						
	15-002 TO 15-003	BRIDGE PROFILE						
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