



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Charleston District

19 March 2024

Project Fact Sheet
Waccamaw River, SC
Horry County, SC
P2#: 493919

Congressional District(s): Russell Fry (SC-07)

Appropriation: Investigations

Phase: Feasibility

Business Line: Flood Risk Management (FRM)

AUTHORITY

Section 216 of the Flood Control Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-611) and Section 445 of WRDA 1999 (P.L. 106-53)

LOCATION

The Waccamaw River Basin is in the northeast corner of South Carolina and the southeast corner of North Carolina. The Waccamaw River begins in Columbus County, NC, and flows 140 miles southwest through South Carolina, roughly paralleling the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. It is joined by the AIWW and the Great Pee Dee in Horry County, SC before reaching the tidal Winyah Bay in Georgetown County, SC. Portions of the river and its tributaries in Horry County are aligned by dense population, while others are surrounded by vast protected and agricultural lands.

DESCRIPTION

Horry County has experienced several flood events of the Waccamaw River since 2015, including those from Hurricanes Joaquin (2015), Matthew (2016), and Florence (2018). The tidal influence, relatively flat topography, and low elevation result in slow draining when flood events occur. Flooding in the Waccamaw River also occurs from the Pee Dee River backflowing into the Waccamaw River and its tributaries. This Flood Risk Management feasibility study will evaluate the cost and benefits of alternatives to reduce risks of riverine flooding and potential storm surge impacts to communities and transportation routes within Horry County. A 1981 Corps reconnaissance report did not identify a solution that was in the federal interest. Since then, the population of the area has grown, and knowledge of climate-related effects has increased (primarily the potential for increased rainfall from storm frequency and/or intensity and sea level rise). The current study will consider a range of options including structural and non-structural management measures, and nature-based features. Due to the large study area and complex hydrology of the basin, the study will cost \$3,900,000, which is being cost shared 50/50 with Horry County, the Non-Federal Sponsor (NFS), and will take four years to complete. The study began in August of 2022 when a Feasibility Cost Share Agreement was signed with Horry County.

STATUS

As of March 2024 – The study team has identified the communities of Bucksport, Conway, Socastee, and Longs/Red Bluff as primary focus areas of the study, based on past flood events. Charleston District and Horry County held public meetings with these communities throughout 2023 to get input on the scope of the study. The team also developed a hydrological model of the Waccamaw River Basin to help identify flood reduction alternatives. In May of 2024, the study team will select a proposed solution (called the Tentatively Selected Plan) which will be summarized in the Draft Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment. This draft report is

scheduled for public and stakeholder review during the summer of 2024. Comments from this review will be evaluated and potentially incorporated in the recommended plan identified in the final report, currently scheduled for mid-2025. The Chief's Report, which identifies the viability, cost, and economic benefit of a flood reduction project for this area, is expected to be signed in 2026 and upon review by Congress, would be eligible for congressional authorization in the next Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) or other authorizing legislation.

To date, the study has received \$1,400,000 in federal appropriations from FY22-FY24, matched by the NFS for a total of \$2,800,000. An additional \$550,000 of federal funds and of NFS funds (\$1,100,000 total) are required for project completion.

SPONSOR

Horry County, SC

PROJECT MANAGER

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