JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE

CHARLESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS 69A Hagood Avenue Charleston, South Carolina 29403-5107 and

THE S.C. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL Office of Environmental Quality Control

Water Quality Certification and Wetlands Programs Section 2600 Bull Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

REGULATORY DIVISION

October 14, 2014

Refer to: P/N #2011-1034-DIM

Pursuant to Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1341), and the South Carolina Coastal Zone Management Act (48-39-10 et.seq.) an application has been submitted to the Department of the Army and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control by

South Carolina Department of Transportation c/o Will McGoldrick Post Office Box 191, 955 Park Street Columbia, South Carolina 20202-0191

for a permit to place fill material in waters of the U.S., including wetlands adjacent to the

Ashley River

located along the existing South Carolina Highway 165, Delemar Highway, between Ashley Ridge High School and Carolinian Drive, Dorchester County, South Carolina (Latitude 32.936883, Longitude –80.215259).

In order to give all interested parties an opportunity to express their views

NOTICE

is hereby given that written statements regarding the proposed work will be received by the **Corps** until

15 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE

And **SCDHEC** will receive written statements regarding the proposed work until

30 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE

from those interested in the activity and whose interests may be affected by the proposed work.

The proposed project includes widening the existing South Carolina Highway 165, Delemar Highway, from a two lane highway with no median to a four lane median separated highway. Each

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travel lane will be 12 feet in width and the center median will be 15 feet in width and will accommodate turning traffic. The improvements also include dedicated bicycle lanes in each direction, 4 feet in width, an 8 foot sidewalk on the northern side of the roadway for pedestrian access for Ashley Ridge High school to adjacent neighborhoods, and 6 foot wide grassed shoulders for safety and emergency access. The improved roadway will tie into the ongoing widening construction to the eastern portion of SC 165 and will match the profile of that project.

In detail, the proposed project will impact a total of 5.6052 acres of freshwater wetlands. These impacts include 5.0097 acres of permanent cut/fill impacts, 0.0273 acre of fill for rip-rap and pipes, and 0.5682 acre for clearing impacts. Please see the referenced project drawings dated September 22, 2014 for additional details of the project impacts.

<u>Purpose</u>: According to the applicant, the purpose of the proposed work is to improve safety and provide facilities for alternate, non-motorized transportation modes along the route, and improve capacity of the roadway.

<u>Avoidance and Minimization</u>: The applicant states that efforts to avoid and/or minimize impacts to waters of the US include:

- Reducing fill slopes from 3:1 to 3:1 barn roof style.
- Sediment and erosion control measures, consistent with the State's best management practices (BMPs), will be installed during construction, to include a double row of silt fence adjacent to all wetlands.
- The reduction of auxiliary turning lanes from 15 feet in width to 12 feet in width.

<u>Mitigation</u>: The applicant states that for the proposed impacts to waters of the U.S. the project would require 63.3234 mitigation credits. The applicant has proposed to debit or purchase the appropriate mitigation credits/acres from one or a combination of the following mitigation banks: Pigeon Pond Mitigation Bank, Congaree-Carton Wetland Mitigation Bank, and/ or SCDOT Black River mitigation bank.

The District Engineer has concluded that the discharges associated with this project, both direct and indirect, should be reviewed by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control in accordance with provisions of Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. As such, this notice constitutes a request, on behalf of the applicant, for certification that this project will comply with applicable effluent limitations and water quality standards. The work shown on this application must also be certified as consistent with applicable provisions of the South Carolina Coastal Zone Management Act (15 CFR 930). The District Engineer will not process this application to a conclusion until such certifications are received. The applicant is hereby advised that supplemental information may be required by the State to facilitate the review. Persons wishing to comment or object to State certification must submit all comments in writing to the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control at the above address within thirty (30) days of the date of this notice.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Implementation of the proposed project would impact approximately 5.6052 acres of freshwater wetlands upstream of estuarine substrates and emergent wetlands utilized by various life stages of species comprising the red drum, shrimp, and snapper-grouper management complexes. Our initial

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determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial individual or cumulative adverse impact on EFH or fisheries managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the NMFS.

The District Engineer has consulted the most recently available information and has determined that the project will have no effect on any Federally endangered, threatened, or proposed species and will not result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated or proposed critical habitat. This public notice serves as a request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service for any additional information they may have on whether any listed or proposed endangered or threatened species or designated or proposed critical habitat may be present in the area which would be affected by the activity, pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (as amended).

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), this public notice also constitutes a request to Indian Tribes to notify the District Engineer of any historic properties of religious and cultural significance to them that may be affected by the proposed undertaking.

In accordance with the NHPA, the District Engineer has also consulted the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places for the presence or absence of registered properties, or properties listed as being eligible for inclusion therein, and this worksite is not included as a registered property or property listed as being eligible for inclusion in the Register. To insure that other cultural resources that the District Engineer is not aware of are not overlooked, this public notice also serves as a request to the State Historic Preservation Office to provide any information it may have with regard to historic and cultural resources.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for a public hearing shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the activity on the public interest and will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act and, as appropriate, the criteria established under authority of Section 102 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972, as amended. 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 project must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the project 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 and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. A permit will be granted unless the District Engineer determines that it would be contrary to the public interest. In cases of conflicting property rights, the Corps of Engineers cannot undertake to adjudicate rival claims.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate

the impacts of this activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this project. 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 activity.

If there are any questions concerning this public notice, please contact Christopher Mims at 843-329-8044 or toll free at 1-866-329-8187.































