



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
SAVANNAH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
REGULATORY BRANCH, NORTHERN SECTION  
1590 ADAMSON PARKWAY, SUITE 200  
MORROW, GEORGIA 30260-1777

September 15, 2004

Regulatory Branch  
200321990

**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: 200321990

Applicant: Georgia Department of Transportation  
Office of Environment/Location  
Attention: Mr. Harvey D. Keepler  
3393 Aviation Circle  
Atlanta, Georgia 30336-1593

Agent: Moreland Altobelli Associates, Inc.  
Attention: Ms. Lehla Lee  
2211 Beaver Ruin Road, Suite 190  
Norcross, Georgia 30071

Location of Proposed Work: The site is located at and around the interchange of Interstate 85 (I-85) and State Route 316 (SR 316) near the City of Duluth, Gwinnett County, Georgia. The proposed roadway improvements on I-85 extend approximately 1.8 miles south of Pleasant Hill Road Bridge to approximately 1.4 miles north of Old Peachtree Road Bridge. On SR 316, the project extends from the I-85/SR 316 interchange to the Herrington Road Bridge. The coordinates provided for this project are latitude 33° 57' 08" North and longitude 84° 07' 49" West.

Description of Work Subject to the Jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers: The applicant, Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), proposes to improve safety and operational efficiency through the existing project corridor by changing the flow of traffic and congestion conditions. This proposed project responds to increasing traffic congestion, declining mobility levels, air quality, and environmental concerns in the surrounding area. Currently large volumes of vehicles enter Interstate-85 (I-85) from westbound State Route (SR) 316 from a left-lane flyover ramp entrance and then in 1.6 miles leave at the Pleasant Hill Road exit ramp. This causes traffic to shift and weave across four freeway lanes which is a dangerous situation leading to accidents. GDOT's project number is HPP-IM-85-2(146) and P.I. No. 110530.

The proposed project involves the reconstruction and improvement of the I-85 interchange with SR 316, expansion of the I-85 northbound and southbound collector-distributor (C-D) system, the addition of an eastbound C-D road on SR 316, and the extension of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on I-85 and SR 316. The project would add a flyover to enable SR 316 westbound traffic to enter I-85 southbound on the right side, eliminating the existing inside flyover entrance ramp. A second flyover would carry SR 316 traffic westbound to Pleasant Hill Road to the proposed 2.5 mile extension of the existing southbound C-D roadway.

The existing northbound C-D roadway would be extended 2.2 miles and tie to the Pleasant Hill Road on-ramp. A ramp to I-85 northbound would be provided above the Boggs Road overpass to replace the existing Pleasant Hill Road on-ramp. A 1.1 mile eastbound C-D roadway would exit C-D northbound and tie into SR 316 at the existing Herrington Road overpass, maintaining the Pleasant Hill Road to SR 316 traffic pattern. Another ramp above the Pleasant Hill Road overpass would provide a two-lane exit for the I-85 northbound to SR 120 and Boggs Road via the C-D northbound. The existing Boggs Road exit and entrance ramps would be relocated to the proposed eastbound and southbound C-Ds.

The proposed project includes 2.8 miles of construction and 3.7 miles of re-striping for HOV lanes. The I-85 HOV lanes would tie into the existing the HOV lanes. An HOV interchange would be provided to carry the HOV lanes along SR 316 to the existing Herrington Road overpass.

The proposed project would result in impacts to approximately 6.12 acres of wetlands and 1,884 linear feet of streams for nine road crossings. There would also be 1.6 acres of wetlands temporarily impacted. The wetlands and streams would be impacted as follows:

- a. 3 unnamed tributaries to Sweetwater Creek: culvert extension of 254 linear feet, culvert extension of 171 linear feet, and pipe 135 linear feet.
- b. Singleton Creek: culvert extension of 456 linear feet.
- c. One unnamed tributary to Singleton Creek: fill and relocation of 610 linear feet.
- d. Lee Daniel Creek: culvert extension of 187 linear feet.
- e. One unnamed tributary to Lee Daniel Creek: culvert extension of 71 linear feet.
- f. 0.63 acre of a wetland for bridge widening.
- g. 0.87 acre of a wetland for road construction.
- h. 1.6 acre temporarily and 3.96 acre permanently of a wetland for a bridge over Sweetwater Creek and culvert extension at Singleton Creek.
- i. 0.22 acre of wetland for road construction and flyover ramp.
- j. 0.44 acre of wetland for road construction.

GDOT states that the proposed road alignment was developed considering all potential environmental impacts, with every attempt made to avoid potentially sensitive ecological areas. However, total avoidance of impacts was not possible due to the linear nature of streams located with the proposed project area and existing transportation system. The majority of the proposed project follows the existing roadway alignment that minimizes impacts to stream sites. GDOT proposes to provide compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts to jurisdictional waters by

the purchase of 40.044 wetland credits and 8,010 stream credits from an approved mitigation bank in the drainage basin. No existing mitigation site along the proposed project corridor will be impacted by this project. Prior to the approval of the purchase of credits from a commercial mitigation bank, the applicant must demonstrate through documentation to the US Army Corps of Engineers that the option of mitigation on-site and within basin has been thoroughly investigated, with no potential sites located.

## BACKGROUND

This Joint Public Notice announces a request for authorizations from both the US 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 by an applicant for a Federal Permit to conduct an 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 also be seen in the US Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, Regulatory Branch, Northern Section, 1590 Adamson Parkway, Suite 200, Morrow, Georgia 30260.

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

## US 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: Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, we request the Georgia Historical Preservation Division (HPD) or any

other interested party review the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) to determine if the property has or has not any registered properties or properties listed as eligible for inclusion located at the site or in the area affected by the proposed work. Presently unknown archaeological, scientific, prehistorical, or historical data may be located at the site and could be affected by the proposed work.

GDOT had a field survey for properties in or eligible for inclusion in the NRHP along the corridor of the proposed project performed that found no historic resources in or eligible for inclusion in the NRHP within the project's area of potential effect. This field survey was coordinated with and concurred on by the Georgia HPD (HP970723-001).

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 from the US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, or any other interested party, information on whether any species listed or proposed for listing may be present in the area.

GDOT researched and field surveyed the project area for federally endangered species and their habitat. They state that the proposed project would have no impact on federally listed species and that critical habitat is not designated in the State of Georgia for any of the listed species in Gwinnett County.

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 that 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 US 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 US 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

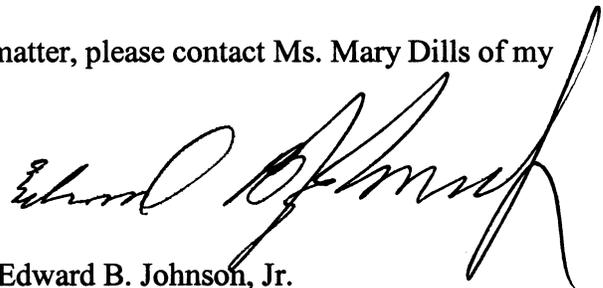
Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

**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 Savannah District, US Army Corps of Engineers, Northern Section, Attention: Ms. Mary Dills, 1590 Adamson Parkway, Suite 200, Morrow, Georgia 30260-1777, no later than 30 days from the date of this notice. Please refer to the applicant's name (Georgia Department of Transportation) and the application number (200321990) in your comments.

If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please contact Ms. Mary Dills of my staff at (678) 422-2727.



Edward B. Johnson, Jr.  
Chief, Northern Section

7 Enclosures

1. Project Location Map
2. Project Map
3. Plan and Profile of Proposed Project
4. Jurisdictional Waters Location Map-Wetlands
5. Jurisdictional Waters Location Map-Streams
6. Tables 1 and 2: Summary of Stream and Wetland Impacts
7. Table 11: Required Mitigation Credits for Riverine Systems