



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAVANNAH DISTRICT
4751 BEST ROAD, SUITE 140
COLLEGE PARK, GEORGIA 30337

April 26, 2024

Regulatory Division
SAS-2018-00639
GDOT P.I. 0003626

Mr. Eric Duff
State Environmental Administrator
Georgia Department of Transportation
600 West Peachtree Street NW, 16th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Dear Mr. Duff:

I refer to the Pre-Construction Notification (PCN) received May 11, 2023, and supplemental information received on May 12, 2023, July 25, 2023, December 21, 2024, and April 8, 2024, requesting verification for use of Regional General Permit (RGP) 34 to permanently impact 1,458 linear feet (lf) (0.51 acre) of perennial stream, 143 lf (0.03 acre) of intermittent streams, and 0.3 acre of wetland and to temporarily impact 166 lf (0.05 acre) of perennial streams and 50 lf (0.01 acre) of intermittent streams associated with the construction of a connector between State Route (SR) 60 and Sardis Road, in Hall County, Georgia (Latitude 34.3574, Longitude -83.8877). I also refer to our letters dated January 4, 2018, and June 24, 2022, which previously verified the aquatic resource delineation and scope of analysis, which this verification supersedes. This project has retained the previously assigned number SAS-2018-00639, and it is important that you refer to this number in all communication concerning this matter.

A total of 1,189.75 (2018) stream credits and 1.84 legacy wetland credits are required to offset proposed impacts to waters of the United States. On March 3, 2023, GDOT purchased 1.84 legacy wetland mitigation credits from the Soque River Mitigation Bank. This fulfilled the wetland mitigation requirement for this project. On May 12, 2023, GDOT provided a Statement of Credit Availability for 1,189.75 (2018) stream mitigation credits from the Georgia Alabama Land Trust In-Lieu Fee Program, which once purchased, would fulfill the wetland mitigation requirement for this project.

We have completed an Aquatic Resources Delineation Review for this site. Any wetlands on-site were delineated in accordance with criteria contained in the 1987 "Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual," as amended by the most recent regional supplements to the manual. The enclosed exhibits entitled, "Figure 3A-E. Federal Waters Map (Aerial), Sardis Road Connector from State Route (SR) 60 to Sardis Road Near Chestatee Road, Hall County, P.I. 0003626," dated August 18, 2022,

accurately identify the delineated limits of all aquatic resources located within the Environmental Survey Boundary. Please note, should this delineation require re-verification, it is subject to change based on site conditions at the time of re-evaluation.

The delineation included herein has been conducted to identify the location and extent of the aquatic resource boundaries and/or the jurisdictional status of aquatic resources for purposes of the Clean Water Act for the particular site identified in this request. This delineation and/or jurisdictional determination may not be valid for the Wetland Conservation Provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended. If you or your tenant are U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program participants, or anticipate participation in USDA programs, you should discuss the applicability of a certified wetland determination with the local USDA service center, prior to starting work.

The Corps has determined that the scope of analysis for the proposal is limited to impacted waters of the US and the immediately adjacent uplands as depicted on the enclosed exhibits entitled, "Figure 2A-G. WOTUS Impact Map, STP00-003-00(626), Hall County, P.I. 0003626, SR 53/Dawsonville Highway to SR 60/Thompson Bridge Road," dated July 2023.

We have completed coordination with other federal and state agencies as described in Part VIII of RGP 34, issued on October 5, 2023. This RGP can be found at <http://www.sas.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/Permitting/GeneralPermits/RegionalGeneralPermits.aspx>. During our coordination procedure, no adverse comments regarding the proposed work were received.

As a result of our evaluation of your project, we have determined that the proposed activity is authorized under RGP 34. Your use of this RGP is valid only if:

a. The activity is conducted in accordance with the information submitted and meets the conditions applicable to the RGP.

b. You shall obtain and comply with all appropriate federal, state, and local authorizations required for this type of activity. A stream buffer variance may be required from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division (Georgia EPD), as defined in the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act of 1975, as amended. Information concerning variances can be obtained at the Georgia EPD's website at www.epd.georgia.gov, or by calling (404) 463-1511.

c. All work conducted under this permit shall be located, outlined, designed, constructed and operated in accordance with the minimal requirements of the Georgia

Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act of 1975, as amended. Utilization of plans and specifications contained in the "Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control," (Latest Edition), published by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission, will aid in achieving compliance with the aforementioned minimal requirements.

d. You shall install and maintain erosion and sediment control measures in upland areas of the project site, in accordance with the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act of 1975, as amended, to minimize the introduction of sediment into and the erosion of streams, wetlands and other waters of the United States. This permit does not authorize installation of check-dams, weirs, bulkheads or other erosion control measures in streams, wetlands or other waters of the United States. Authorization would be required from the Corps prior to installing any erosion control measures in waters of the United States.

e. You shall install and maintain erosion and sediment control measures for all fill material that is authorized to be discharged in streams, wetlands and other waters of the United States, in accordance with the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act of 1975, as amended, and permanently stabilize fill areas at the earliest practicable date.

f. The project shall be constructed in accordance with the enclosed plans and drawings entitled, "Department of Transportation, State of Georgia, Plan and Profile of Proposed Sardis Road Connector, from East of Chestatee Road to West of S.R. 60, Along S.R. 283," Drawings No. 01-0001, dated 6/6/2022; "Mainline Plan, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 13-001, dated 10/12/2022; "Mainline Plan, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 13-002 through 13-007, dated 8/19/2022; "Mainline Plan, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 13-008, dated 8/25/2022; "Mainline Plan, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 13-009, dated 8/19/2022; "Mainline Plan, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 13-010, dated 8/22/2022; "Mainline Plan, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 13-011, dated 8/19/2022; Mainline Plan, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 13-012, dated 9/23/2022; "Mainline Plan, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 13-013 and 13-014, dated 8/19/2022; "Ledan Rd Ext., Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 13-015, dated 8/19/2022; "Utility Plans, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 24-000, dated 8/15/2022; "Utility Plans, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 24-000 through 24-014, dated 8/15/2022; "Ledan Rd Ext., Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 24-015, dated 8/15/2022; "Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 2 Plan View, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 39-001, dated 7/4/2022; "Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 2 Existing Profile, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County," Drawing No. 39-002, dated 7/4/2022; "Perennial Stream

Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 2 Proposed Profile, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-003, dated 9/23/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 2 Stream Cross Section, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing Nos. 39-004 through 39-006, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 2 Plan View 2, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-007, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 2 Existing Profile 2, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-008, dated 7/4/2022; ; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 2 Proposed Profile, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-009, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 2 Stream Cross Section, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing Nos. 39-010 through 39-012, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 11 Plan View, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-013, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 11 Existing Profile, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-014, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 11 Proposed Profile, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-015, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 11 Stream Cross Section, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing Nos. 39-016 through 39-018, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 13 Plan View, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-019, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 13 Existing Profile, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-020, dated 7/4/2022; “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 13 Proposed Profile, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing No. 39-021, dated 7/4/2022; and “Perennial Stream Culvert Diagrams, Perennial Stream 13 Stream Cross Section, Sardis Road Connector, Hall County,” Drawing Nos. 39-022 through 39-024, dated 7/4/2022.

g. You shall notify the Corps, in writing, at least 10 days in advance of commencement of work authorized by this permit.

h. You fill out and sign the enclosed certification and return it to our office within 30 days of completion of the activity authorized by this permit.

i. Prior to the commencement of any permitted work in waters of the United States, the permittee shall purchase 1,189.75 (2018) stream mitigation credits from the Georgia-Alabama Trust In-Lieu Fee Program and submit documentation of the credit purchase to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The credit purchase documentation must reference the Corps file number assigned to the permitted project. If all or a portion of the required credits are not available from these sources, you must obtain written approval from the Corps prior to purchasing any credits from an alternate mitigation source.

The Corps has reviewed this project in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service Information for Planning and Consultation list was generated for the proposed project. No federally protected species are predicted to occur within the project area. Therefore, the project would have "no effect" on any federally protected species or critical habitat. Authorization of an activity by a RGP does not authorize the "take" of threatened or endangered species. In the absence of separate authorization, both lethal and non-lethal "takes" of protected species are in violation of the Endangered Species Act.

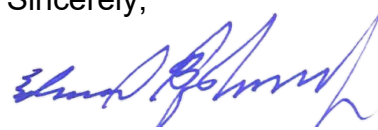
This verification is valid until the RGP is modified, reissued or revoked. All of the transportation RGPs are scheduled to expire on October 5, 2028. If the authorized work is not initiated or completed prior to the RGP expiration date, the project will be conditionally re-authorized if and when the RGPs are re-issued by the Corps for a subsequent five-year period, provided: (a) the expired and re-issued RGP used to authorize the project are substantively the same; and (b) the RGP authorized project is unchanged. In such cases, you are not required to request written verification from the Corps that the project continues to be authorized by the re-issued RGP. Please note, a RGP authorized project can only be conditionally re-authorized once. Further, should your project not be initiated or completed by the end of the second five-year RGP authorization period, you must submit a new PCN to the Corps and request verification of use of a RGP to complete the project. It is incumbent upon you to remain informed of changes to the RGP.

This authorization should not be construed to mean that any future projects requiring Department of the Army authorization would necessarily be authorized. Any new proposal, whether associated with this project or not, would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Any prior approvals would not be a determining factor in making a decision on any future request. Revisions to your proposal may invalidate this authorization. In the event changes to this project are contemplated, I recommend that you coordinate with us prior to proceeding with the work.

This communication does not relieve you of any obligation or responsibility for complying with the provisions of any other laws or regulations of other federal, state or local authorities. It does not affect your liability for any damages or claims that may arise as a result of the work. It does not convey any property rights, either in real estate or material, or any exclusive privileges. It also does not affect your liability for any interference with existing or proposed federal projects. If the information you have submitted and on which the Corps bases its determination/decision of authorization under the RGP is later found to be in error, this determination may be subject to modification, suspension, or revocation.

If you have any questions, please call Dr. Anne Sexton-Paperno, Biologist, Management Branch, at 678-422-5731.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Edward B. Johnson, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward B. Johnson, Jr.
Chief, Management Branch

Enclosures

Regulatory Division

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE
WITH
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
REGIONAL GENERAL PERMIT 34

PERMIT FILE NUMBER: SAS-2018-00639/GDOT P.I. 0003626

PERMITTEE ADDRESS: Mr. Eric Duff, State Environmental Administrator, Georgia Department of Transportation, 600 West Peachtree Street NW, 16th Floor, Atlanta, Georgia 30308.

LOCATION OF WORK: The project would construct a new location connector between the Sardis Road and Chestatee Road intersection and extend north to State Route (SR) 60 near the intersection with SR 283, west of the City of Gainesville, Hall County, Georgia (Latitude 34.3574, Longitude -83.8877).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: To permanently impact 1,458 linear feet (lf) (0.51 acre) of perennial streams, 143 lf (0.03 acre) of intermittent streams, and 0.3 acre of wetland and to temporarily impact 166 lf (0.05 acre) of perennial streams and 50 lf (0.01 acre) of intermittent streams for the construction of a new location connector road.

ACRES AND/OR LINEAR FEET OF WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES IMPACTED: Permanent impacts to 1,458 linear feet (lf) (0.51 acre) of perennial streams, 143 lf (0.03 acre) of intermittent streams, and 0.3 acre of wetland, and temporary impacts to 166 lf (0.05 acre) of perennial streams and 50 lf (0.01 acre) of intermittent streams.

DATE WORK IN WATERS OF UNITED STATES COMPLETED: _____

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION REQUIRED: A total of 1,189.75 (2018) stream credits and 1.84 legacy wetland credits are required to offset proposed impacts to waters of the United States. On March 3, 2023, GDOT purchased 1.84 legacy wetland mitigation credits from the Soque River Mitigation Bank, fulfilling the wetland mitigation requirement for this project. On May 12, 2023, GDOT provided a Statement of Credit Availability for 1,189.75 (2018) stream mitigation credits from the Georgia Alabama Land Trust In-Lieu Fee Program, which once purchased, would fulfill the wetland mitigation requirement for this project.

I understand that the permitted activity is subject to a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Compliance Inspection. If I fail to comply with the permit conditions as specified in Regional General Permit 34, issued on October 5, 2023, it may be subject to suspension, modification or revocation.

I hereby certify that the work authorized by the above referenced permit as well as any required mitigation (if applicable) has been completed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the said permit.

Signature of Permittee

Date