



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

MARJORY STONEMAN DOUGLAS BUILDING
3900 COMMONWEALTH BOULEVARD
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-3000

RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

HERSCHEL T. VINYARD JR.
SECRETARY

April 18, 2013

Eric P. Summa
Chief, Environmental Branch
Planning Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District
701 San Marco Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL 32207-0019

Project: Herbert Hoover Dike Rehabilitation Project
Phase: Seepage Management Test Facility
Subject: Exemption for Construction and Instrument Installation Activities
File No.: 0234604-019

Dear Mr. Summa,

On February 15, 2013 the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (Department) received an application from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) requesting an exemption pursuant to Subsection 373.406(6), Florida Statutes (F.S.) for the construction of the Herbert Hoover Dike (HHD) Rehabilitation Project Seepage Management Test Facility (File No. 0234604-019). The Department issued a request for additional information (RAI-1) on March 14, 2013 and received the Corps' response on March 22, 2013. On May 10, 2012 the Corps submitted an application for a revised version of the Seepage Management Test Facility Project and the Department issued an Exemption (File Number 0234604-015) on June 27, 2012. This permit exemption supersedes Exemption File No. 0234604-015 and only authorizes activities specified in the project description identified below.

PROJECT LOCATION:

The project is located within the HHD and the Federal right-of-way in one location along Levee Designation (L-D2). This section is composed of a 4,500 linear foot embankment adjacent to the southern portion of Lake Okeechobee, northwest of the town of Lake Harbor between John Stretch Memorial Park and Culvert 3 (Figure 1). This section of the HHD is bounded on the north by Lake Okeechobee and U.S. Highway 27 to the south. This project is in Palm Beach County, Section 34, Township 43 South, and Range 35 East.

As staff to the Board of Trustees, the Department has reviewed the activities described above, and determined that the activity is subject to a Board of Trustees Lease Agreement No. 00059 issued to the United States of America on October 22, 1940. Right of Entry granted by the South Florida Water Management District for the proposed project may be required.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This project is part of continuing rehabilitation of the HHD. The Seepage Management Test Facility will be constructed to increase safety and stability of the dike and help determine the future rehabilitation direction of the HHD. The purpose of the Seepage Management Test facility is to relieve groundwater pressure by creating an effective flow path for seepage and increase stability by reducing the potential for boils and piping in the dike.

Activities associated with this project include degrading a 4,500 foot section on the landside slope and toe of the dike, and installation of a 4,500 foot seepage management drainage blanket, drainage trench system, chimney drain, and piezometers (Figure 1). The dike will then be returned to its original grade. Approximately 1.5 acres of wetlands may be temporarily impacted by these construction activities. All of the surface waters and wetlands to be directly impacted by construction of the project are Class III Waters.

FINDINGS OF FACT:

In accordance with the requirements of 373.406(6), F.S., the Corps is required to provide the Department with the necessary information to determine whether "...this activity will have only minimal or insignificant individual or cumulative adverse impacts on the water resources of the state." Department staff have reviewed the information submitted regarding the proposed construction and instrument installation and have determined that the proposed activities described above qualify for the requested exemption pursuant to Subsection 373.406(6), Florida Statutes (F.S.) based on the following findings of fact:

1. There are no significant individual or cumulative adverse impacts on water resources anticipated from the proposed activities.
2. The proposed activities have a short term construction duration, which will have minimal temporary impacts to a regularly maintained drainage conveyance system.
3. Any impacts to wetlands resulting from implementation of the project will be avoided, minimized, and mitigated, as appropriate.

Therefore, based on the information submitted to the Department, it has been determined that the proposed activity is exempt under Subsection 373.406(6), F.S. This determination hereby relieves the Corps from the need to obtain a regulatory permit for the activities described herein in accordance with the requirements of Part IV of Chapter 373, F.S.

TERMS OF EXEMPTION

- 1) This determination is based on the information the Corps provided to the Department and the statutes and rules in effect when the application was submitted. This determination is effective only for the specific activity proposed.
- 2) This letter does not absolve the Corps from the responsibility of obtaining other permits (federal, state, or local) or other legal authorizations which may be required for the activity.
- 3) Nothing herein authorizes any entrance upon or activities on property, which is not owned or controlled by the Corps or local sponsor, or conveys any vested rights or any exclusive privileges.
- 4) This exemption does not absolve the Corps from complying with the information on file with the Department.
- 5) This determination of qualification shall automatically expire if site conditions materially change or the governing statutes or rules are amended. In addition, any substantial modifications (to be determined in conjunction with the Department) in your plans should be submitted to the Department for review, as changes may result in a permit being required.
- 6) Activities that qualify for this exemption must be conducted in a manner that does not cause or contribute to a water quality violation, under Chapter 62-302, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). To meet this requirement, the Corps shall use appropriate erosion and turbidity control measures such as the best management practices and guidelines described in Chapter 6 of the *Florida Land Development Manual: A Guide to South Land and Water Management*.
- 7) If prehistoric or historic artifacts (including but not limited to pottery or stone tools associated with Native American cultures, early colonial, or American settlements) are encountered at any time within the project site area, the project should cease all activities involving subsurface disturbance in the immediate vicinity of such discoveries. The Permittee, or other designee, should contact the Florida Department of State,

Division of Historical Resources, Review and Compliance Section at (850) 245-6333 or (800) 847-7278. Project activities should not resume without verbal and/or written authorization from the Division of Historical Resources. In the event that unmarked human remains are encountered during activities, all work shall stop immediately and the proper authorities notified in accordance with Section 872.05, Florida Statutes.

- 8) The determination of exemption, based on the information submitted by the Corps, may be revoked if (i) the area of work should significantly increase or scope of the proposed activities is substantially modified, (ii) if the basis for the exemption is determined to be materially incorrect, or (iii) if the activities cause or contribute to violations of state water quality standards, or (iv) any of the terms of this exemption are violated.

NOTICE OF RIGHTS OF SUBSTANTIALLY AFFECTED PARTIES:

This notice of determination that your activity qualifies for an exemption pursuant to Subsection 373.406(6) constitutes final agency action by the Department unless a timely petition for an administrative hearing is filed pursuant to sections 120.569 and 120.57 of the Florida Statutes. If a sufficient petition for an administrative hearing is timely filed, this determination automatically becomes proposed agency action subject to the result of the administrative review process. Therefore, on the filing of a timely and sufficient petition, this action will not be final and effective until further order of the Department.

Be advised that adjacent landowners and other parties who may be substantially affected by the proposed activities allowed under this determination of exemption have a right to request an administrative hearing on the Department's decision that the proposed activity qualifies for this exemption. Because the administrative process is designed to determine final agency action on the application in the event of a petition being filed, the administrative hearing may result in a final determination that the proposed activity is not authorized under the exemption established under Chapter 373, F.S.

The Department will not publish notice of this determination. Publication of this notice by you is optional and is not required for you to proceed. However, in the event that an administrative hearing is held and the Department's determination is reversed, proceeding with the proposed activity before the time period for requesting an administrative hearing has expired would mean that the activity was conducted without the required authorization.

If you wish to limit the time within which all substantially affected persons may request an administrative hearing, you may elect to publish, at your own expense, the enclosed notice (Attachment 1) in the legal advertisement section of a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the activity is to take place. A single publication will suffice.

For the purposes of publication, a newspaper of general circulation means a newspaper meeting the requirements of Sections 50.011 and 50.031, F.S. In the event you do publish this notice, within seven days of publication, you must provide to the following address proof of publication issued by the newspaper as provided in Section 50.051, F.S. If you provide direct written notice to any person(s) as noted above, you must provide to the following addresses a copy of the direct written notice.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Office of Ecosystem Projects
3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS 24
Tallahassee, Florida, 32399

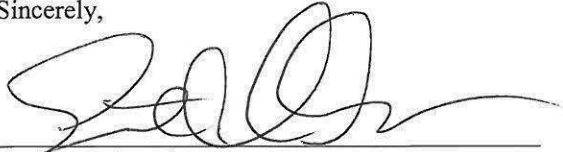
Electronic copies of reports and notices required by this permit shall be sent to RPPS_Comp@dep.state.fl.us.

Please retain this letter for your files as it reflects final agency action barring any administrative hearings which rule otherwise. The activities may be inspected by authorized state personnel in the future to insure compliance with appropriate statutes and administrative codes. If the activities are not in compliance, you may be subject to penalties under Chapters 373, 403, 253, and 258, F.S., as applicable.

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If you have any questions concerning this action, please contact Tanja Hinton at (850) 245-2974 or electronically at Tanja.Hinton@dep.state.fl.us.

Sincerely,



Ernest Marks, Director
Office of Ecosystem Projects

EM/dn/th

FILING AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

FILED, on this date, pursuant to Section 120.52 Florida Statutes, with the designated Department Clerk, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged.


Clerk

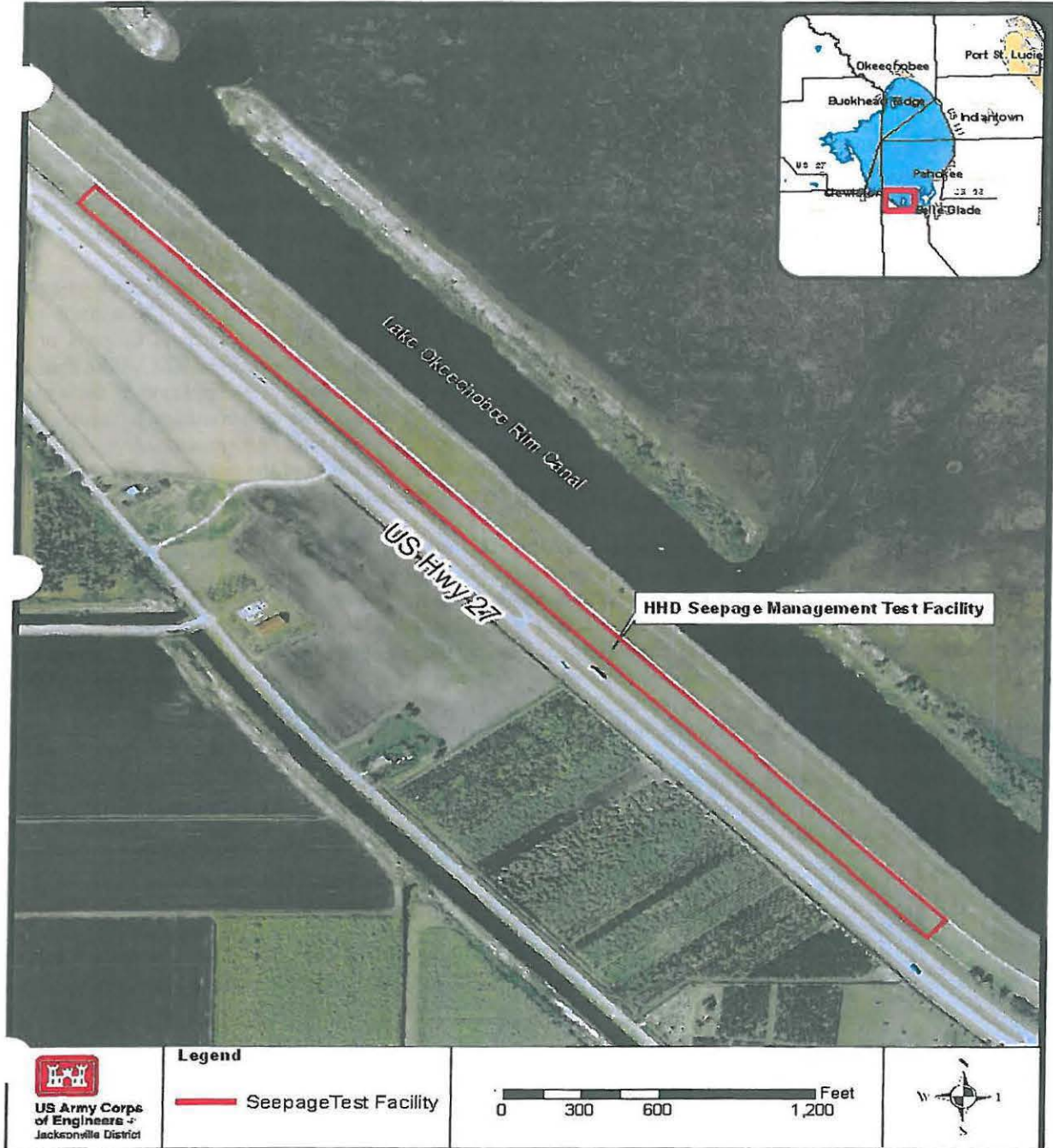
4/18/2013
Date

ELECTRONIC COPIES FURNISHED TO:

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Jerilyn Ashworth, FDEP
Stacey Feken, FDEP
Frank Nearhoof, FDEP
Kenneth Hayman, FDEP
Patrick Gillespie, FDEP
William Rueckert, FDEP
Brian Dougherty, FDEP

Figure 1. Location of the Seepage Management Test Facility



ATTACHMENT 1

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
NOTICE OF AGENCY ACTION

The Department of Environmental Protection gives notice that the following activity proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) was determined to be exempt pursuant to subsection 373.406(6), Florida Statutes, on April 18, 2013. The activity is located on the southern portion of Lake Okeechobee, northwest of the town of Lake Harbor, between John Stretch Memorial Park and Culvert 3. This project is located in Palm Beach County, within Section 34, Township 43 South, Range 35 East. The Department's determination authorizes the Corps to install a 4,500 foot drainage blanket, drainage trench system, chimney drain, and piezometers within the Herbert Hoover Dike.

A person whose substantial interests are affected by the Department's decision may petition for an administrative proceeding (hearing) in accordance with Sections 120.569 and 120.57, Florida Statutes (F.S.). The petition must contain the information set forth below and must be filed (received) in the Office of General Counsel of the Department at 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail station 35, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000, within fourteen days of publication of this notice. A petitioner must mail a copy of the petition to the applicant at the address indicated above, at the time of filing. Failure to file a petition within this time period shall constitute a waiver of any right such person may have to request an administrative determination (hearing) under Sections 120.569 and 120.57 of the Florida Statutes. Any subsequent intervention will be only at the discretion of the presiding officer upon the filing of a motion in compliance with Rule 28-5.207 of the Florida Administrative Code.

The petition shall contain the following information: (a) The name, address, and telephone number of each petitioner, the applicant's name and address, the Department File Number and the county in which the project is proposed; (b) A statement of how and when each petitioner received notice of the Department's action or proposed action; (c) A statement of how each petitioner's substantial interests are affected by the Department's action or proposed action; (d) A statement of the material facts disputed by Petitioner, if any; (e) A statement of facts which petitioner contends warrant reversal or modification of the Department's action or proposed action; (f) A statement of which rules of statutes petitioner contends require reversal or modification of the Department's action petitioner wants the Department to take with respect to the Department's action or proposed action.

The file containing the application for the above determination is available for public inspection during normal business hours, 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m., Monday through Friday, except legal holidays, at the Department of Environmental Protection, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 24, Tallahassee, Florida, 32399.