



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT
701 SAN MARCO BOULEVARD
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32207-8175

November 22, 2024

Regulatory Division
North Branch
Panama City Permits Section

PUBLIC NOTICE

Permit Application No. SAJ-2024-03601 (SP-GSH)

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The Jacksonville District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) 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 described below.

If you are interested in receiving additional project drawings associated with this public notice, please send an e-mail to the project manager by electronic mail at Genevieve.S.Holdridge@usace.army.mil.

APPLICANT: Gulf County BOCC, Attn. Mr. Clay Smallwood
1000 Cecil G Costin, SR
St. Joe, FL 32456

WATERWAY AND LOCATION: The project would affect aquatic resources associated with unnamed wetlands within the Saint Joseph Bay (HUC 031401011200). The site falls within several Water Body IDs (WBID), listed as follows: 1) to the west and south is St. Andrew's Bay which has a water type listed as Estuary; 2) to the north is the Golf Course Drain, water type is stream; and 3) to the east is the Depot Creek, water type is stream (Apalachicola River). (Mainly Freshwater Forested Wetlands, and other surface waters that are stormwater features.)

The project site is located within Gulf County, near the intersection of Highway 98 and County Road 30A Cutoff Road.

Directions to the site are as follows: Heading south on HWY 98/30A at the junction in Port St. Joe, Florida take the exit to HWY 30A and go approximately 1,500 linear feet south. The project would take place on the east side of the road just north of the box culvert.

APPROXIMATE CENTRAL COORDINATES: Latitude 29.7768181
Longitude -85.298432

PROJECT PURPOSE:

Basic: Transportation Infrastructure

Overall: The project purpose is for the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners to construct a road to connect US HWY 98 and County Road 30A in Port St. Joe, Florida in order to provide an additional public roadway, and increased transport efficiency to the residents in this part of Gulf County.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The wetland system consists of a freshwater system. The onsite vegetation consists of Coniferous Plantations and Mixed Scrub-Shrub Wetlands. The existing area surrounding the project area consists of some Coniferous Plantations, Mixed Scrub-Shrub Wetlands, Mixed Hardwood-Coniferous Swamps, and Floating/Emergent Aquatic Vegetation (according to the Florida Regulatory Viewer, Florida Cooperative Land Cover layer, accessed October 31, 2024).

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant seeks authorization to construct a "cut-through" road to connect US HWY 98 and County Road 30A in Port St. Joe, Florida (Parcel ID: 06076-007R). The project would result in a total of 0.515 acre (2,678 cubic yards) of permanent impacts to wetlands, and 0.090 acre to non-wetland waters of the U.S., the latter which is associated with a stormwater swale. The length of the project is approximately 0.187 mile (987 linear feet).

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION INFORMATION – The applicant has provided the following information in support of efforts to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the aquatic environment:

Avoidance and minimization are being achieved through multiple phases of site plans and spatial adjustments. The project was planned to avoid and minimize any negative effects on the special aquatic resources in St. Joe Bay by adhering to the minimal impact requirements outlined in the Individual Permit 62-331.054 of the Florida Administrative Code. The design would result in a minimal impact of only 0.605 acre.

The following Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be employed throughout construction, including the use of turbidity curtains, silt screens, staked hay bales, appropriate side slopes, grade stabilization, and other measures as appropriate to prevent erosion and preclude turbidity and sediments from entering adjacent wetland areas. Turbidity would be contained via use of turbidity curtains in open water areas. Contractors performing the construction would be required to properly maintain all equipment to preclude releases of oils, grease, fuels, or other pollutants to the greatest extent practicable. Clean soil (and possibly rocks in certain instances) that is free of pollutants, obtained from either onsite or offsite sources, would be used for fill material where needed. Temporary fill stockpile areas would be located in uplands and erosion control devices would be used to prevent material from entering adjacent waters or wetlands. All side slopes would be stabilized following completion of construction by planting grass seed, or by applying mulch or sod. Appropriate Best Management Practices would be employed throughout the duration of construction until construction zones and surrounding areas are stabilized. Specific erosion control methods and

devices used during construction would conform to applicable standards set forth in the FDER Florida Development Manual, Sections 6-301 through 6-500 (FDER 1988).

In addition, the applicant proposes to use the Standard Protections Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake (*Drymarchon couperi*) (dated May 2024) developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in Florida and Georgia.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION – The applicant has offered the following compensatory mitigation plan to offset unavoidable functional loss to the aquatic environment:

The applicant has provided the following explanation why compensatory mitigation should not be required:

The project was carefully planned to avoid and minimize any negative effects on the special aquatic resources by adhering to the minimal impact requirements outlined in Individual Permit 62-331.054 of the Florida Administrative Code. Our resulting design and construction phases has a minimal impact of only 0.605 acre, which we believe is the best possible minimization strategy for the task at hand.

CULTURAL RESOURCES:

The Corps is evaluating the undertaking for effects to historic properties as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This public notice serves to inform the public of the proposed undertaking and invites comments including those from local, State, and Federal government Agencies with respect to historic resources. Our final determination relative to historic resource impacts may be subject to additional coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer, those federally recognized tribes with concerns in Florida and the Permit Area, and other interested parties.

A search on the Florida Regulatory Viewer (SAJ SHPO Data layer, and the National Register of Historic Places layer, accessed October 31, 2024) indicated no registered or eligible historic place is located within the 1 mile of the project area. In addition, a map from SHPO indicated that no cultural resources were identified in the project area, based on a records search. Although there are no findings of historic places, it does not preclude the potential to discovery of unknown, intact, buried cultural resources, which may be eligible for the National Register.

The Corps has preliminarily determined that there would be no effect on cultural resources.

ENDANGERED SPECIES:

The Corps has determined the proposed project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the Eastern Indigo Snake (*Drymarchon couperi*) its designated critical habitat. The Corps will request U.S. Fish and Wildlife concurrence with this determination pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

According to a search on the NMFS National Endangered Species Critical Habitat Mapper no critical habitat for NMFS-managed species occurs in the Project Area (accessed October 31, 2024). According to the Critical Habitat Mapping Tool for Threatened and Endangered Species (USFWS) accessed on October 31, 2024, there is no critical habitat (proposed or designated) located within 2 miles of the project area.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT (EFH): No Essential Fish Habitat is located within the Project area.

According to a search on the NOAA Fisheries Essential Fish Habitat Mapper (accessed on October 31, 2024) no Essential Fish Habitat including South Atlantic EFH Species or Highly Migratory Species EFH or Habitat Areas of Particular Concern were located within the Project area. Furthermore, the project area is over 1000 feet (0.20 miles) from Coastal Waters.

NAVIGATION: The proposed activity is not located in the vicinity of a federal navigation channel.

SECTION 408: The applicant will not require permission under Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 USC 408) because the activity, in whole or in part, would not alter, occupy, or use a Corps Civil Works project.

NOTE: This public notice is being issued based on information furnished by the applicant. This information has not been verified or evaluated to ensure compliance with laws and regulation governing the regulatory program. The jurisdictional line has been verified by Corps personnel.

COMMENTS regarding the potential authorization of the work proposed should be submitted in writing to the attention of the District Engineer through the Los Angeles and San Bernardino Permits Section, L.A. District, 915 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA, 90017 within 30 days from the date of this notice.

The decision whether to issue or deny this permit application will be based on the information received from this public notice and the evaluation of the probable impact to the associated wetlands. This is based on an analysis of the applicant's avoidance and minimization efforts for the project, as well as the compensatory mitigation proposed.

QUESTIONS concerning this application should be directed to the project manager, Genevieve Holdridge, in writing at the Los Angeles and San Bernardino Permits

Section, L.A. District, 915 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, CA, 90017; by electronic mail at Genevieve.S.Holdridge@usace.army.mil; or, by telephone at (213)308-1877.

IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES: Coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the National Marine Fisheries Services, and other Federal, State, and local agencies, environmental groups, and concerned citizens generally yields pertinent environmental information that is instrumental in determining the impact the proposed action will have on the natural resources of the area.

EVALUATION: 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 benefits, which 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 cumulative impacts thereof; among these are conservation, economics, esthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historical properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain 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.

The US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) 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 proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this determination, comments are used to assess impacts to endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: Water Quality Certification may be required from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT CONSISTENCY: In Florida, the State approval constitutes compliance with the approved Coastal Zone Management Plan.

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within the designated comment period of the notice and must state the specific reasons for requesting the public hearing.

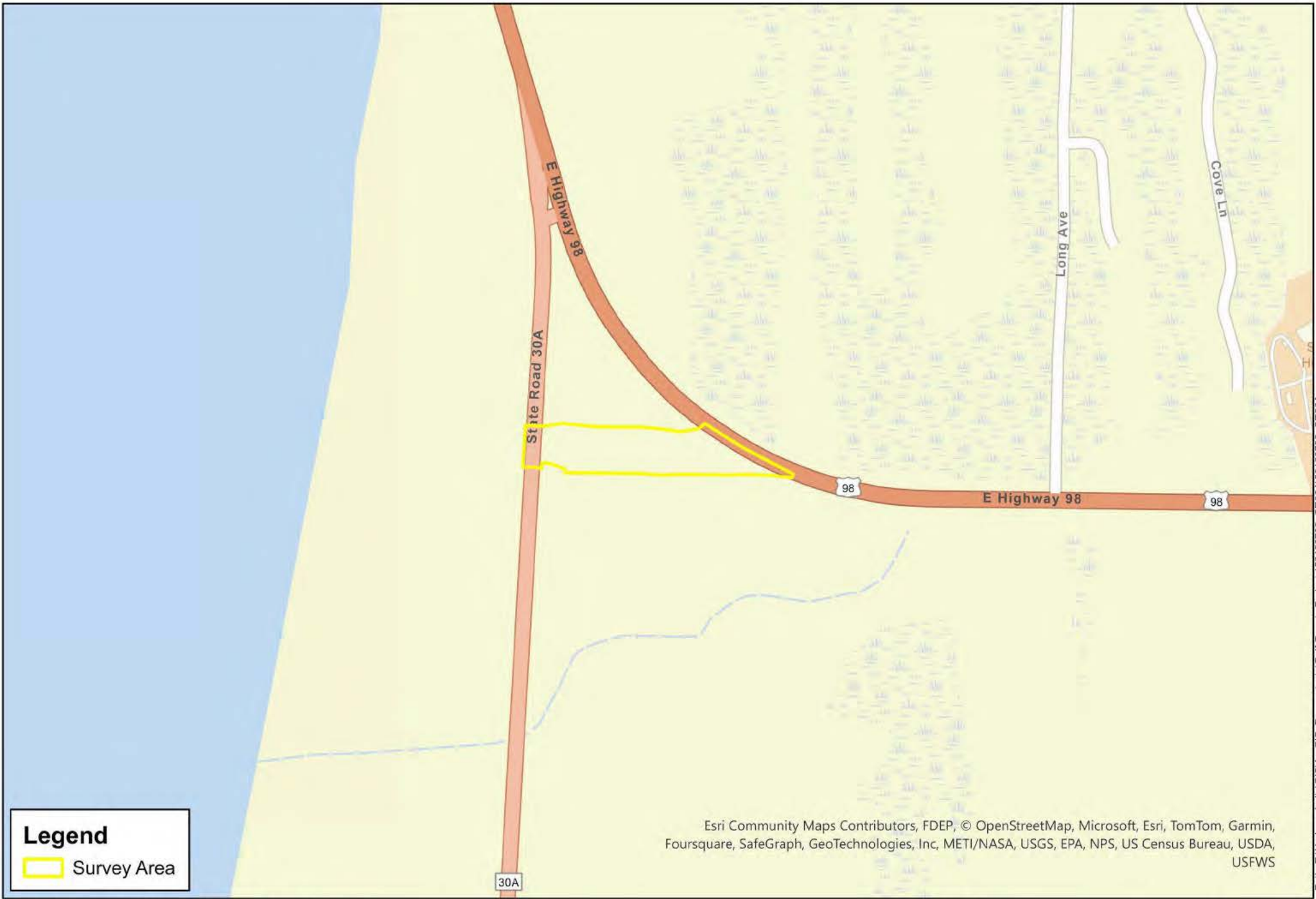


Figure 1: Site Location Map

Project #: 50163799

Dewberry Project: County Road 30A Cutoff Road

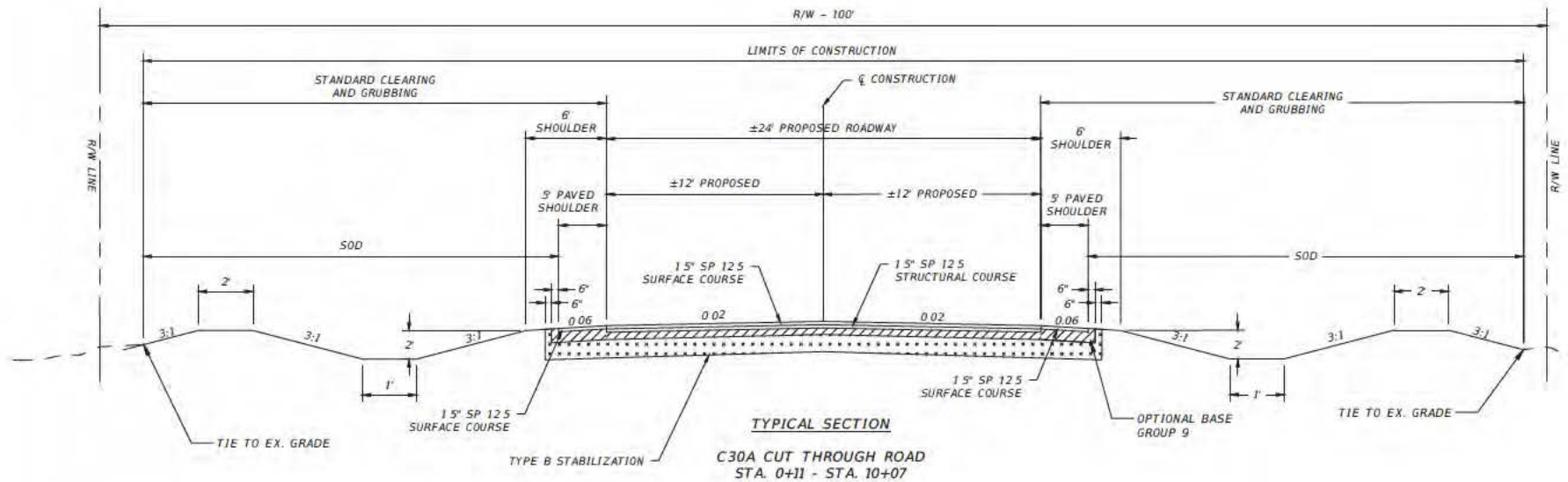
Port St. Joe, Gulf County, FL

6/6/2024

N
Data Source: Dewberry;
Image Source: Esri

0 300 600 Feet

 **Dewberry**



NEW CONSTRUCTION
1.5" SP 12.5 SURFACE COURSE (TRAFFIC B)
1.5" SP 12.5 STRUCTURAL COURSE (TRAFFIC B)
OPTIONAL BASE GROUP 9
TYPE B STABILIZATION

TRAFFIC DATA

DESIGN SPEED - 25 MPH
POSTED SPEED LIMIT - 20 MPH
CLEAR ZONE - 6'
AADT < 400 (2024)
AADT < 400 (2025)
AADT < 400 (2045)

NOTES:

- ALL FINAL SURFACE ASPHALT SHALL BE PLACED WITH THE USE OF A MATERIAL TRANSFER VEHICLE.
- ALL TESTING SHALL BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH FDOT STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS. (LATEST EDITION)
- CLEAR ZONE FOR THIS PROJECT IS 6'. THE DESIGN CLEAR ZONE DOES NOT APPLY FOR CLEAR ZONE WIDTHS FOR WORK ZONES.
- USE STATIC COMPACTION ONLY.

REVISIONS				JOSHUA ALEXANDER STEPHENS, P.E. P.E. LICENSE NUMBER 94114 DEWBERRY ENGINEERS INC. 324 MARINA DR PORT ST JOE, FL 32456	CR30A CUT THROUGH ROAD			TYPICAL SECTION	SHEET NO. 6
DATE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DESCRIPTION		ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID		
						GULF	FPID NO		

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THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF THIS SHEET IS THE ELECTRONIC FILE DIGITALLY SIGNED AND SEALED UNDER RULE 61G15-23.004, F.A.C.