



Summary Page

Name of Project East Beach Water Impoundment Project

Permit Number Public Notice SAS-2025-00643

This Section 401 Water Quality Certification is issued to Glynn County for aquatic resource impacts associated with filling a tidepool with sand to improve and protect public safety. The approximate 9.74-acre project area is located on East Beach between Neptune Road and Driftwood Drive on St. Simons Island, Glynn County, Georgia (31.13966, -81.37611). According to the 404 application, the proposed project consists of restoration and filling of an area of East Beach that has developed a tidal pool complex over the past several years that is currently an impounded open water area with developing wetland areas. The project would fill the tidal pool area while avoiding wetland impacts. Native sand would be harvested onsite to provide clean fill material.

The request for certification was on public notice from September 11, 2025 to October 14, 2025.

Public Comments

- Public comments were received during public notice period. (See attachment.)
- Public comments were not received during public notice period.

Final Certification Decision

- Certified
- Certified with Conditions
- Denied
- Waived

EPD Response to Comments on East Beach Water Impoundment Project- SAS-2025-00643

#	Public Comments	EPD Responses
1	<p>One commenter stated “I am very opposed to the plan to fill in over 9 acres of water -- the creation of these sloughs is totally natural and represents the ongoing evolution of a beach. The water is not contaminated; rather, it is normal water collecting in a normal way. Anything done is simply fighting nature and pointless and is a waste of money and energy”.</p>	<p>EPD’s review of the Request for 401 Water Quality Certification is based on Georgia Rule 391-3-6-.03 Designated Uses and Water Quality Standards as required by 40 CFR Part 121.5 of the Clean Water Act Section 401 to ensure that projects do not violate State water quality standards. The 401 Water Quality Certification is conditioned so that the project must comply with the above water quality standards.</p>
2	<p>One commenter stated “I say no as it’s a barrier island subject to movement. Why should the tax payer fund this project? If it were not on the Island the DNR would not be allocating resources or allowing this project”.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The project will be funded by Glynn County, not DNR.</p>
3	<p>One commenter stated “My family has had the pleasure of enjoying the beautiful beaches in St Simons for over 2 decades. I have owned property there now for over the last 5 years. Since purchasing the property we have seen a massive change to the beaches on East beach resulting in stale warm water with a musky smell. I have 3 children that enjoy the beaches and ocean but now have to walk over 100 yards just to enter sand that isn’t over grown with marshland and stagnant water. I would like to point out that leaving this as is would be a huge health concern on many levels including a stagnant breeding ground for flesh eating bacteria, neglect entry to a has been public access along with a stinch making it undesirable to even cross. I believe that full restoration along with dredging by adding sand would fix the problems listed above and make a once desirable vacation attraction desirable again. I hope this is taken into complete consideration and would 100% support the county in fixing our beautiful beaches”.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>

<p>4</p>	<p>One commenter stated “I am writing this to you today and attaching some photos I took last week before the rain completely prohibited our access to the beach at Driftwood drive beach access at St. Simons Island Georgia. The photos show the height and narrow path at the beginning that lead to the black pools of standing water that must be waded through to gain access to the beach. Photo 4735 shows some beach goers and the height of the vegetation as they come down the stagnant water filled path.</p> <p>The "swamp like" water between the beach access and the actual beach is not safe for beach goers of any age or dogs for that matter. Because of this stagnant standing water there were swarms of mosquitoes along the path to the beach.</p> <p>We had been told by one of our neighbors that mosquitoes were really bad on the public access path to the beach so we sprayed with repellent and still had over 20 bites each from walking to the beach one time at 5pm on a sunny clear day. Both of us while in our 60's were able to walk at a good pace?</p> <p>This water shaded by the overgrown shrubbery 6-7ft as of 9/9/25 was as stated black and oily looking. covered in bird feces in areas and smelled of dead fish.</p> <p>The bacteria in that water is unsafe for any person of any age to be walking in.</p> <p>We saw no sand crabs on the path as we have in the past 20yrs. We have walked this path through what was then dry sand and dunes. We only experienced mosquitoes and a 3ft</p>	<p>EPD’s review of the Request for 401 Water Quality Certification is based on Georgia Rule 391-3-6-.03 Designated Uses and Water Quality Standards as required by 40 CFR Part 121.5 of the Clean Water Act Section 401 to ensure that projects do not violate State water quality standards. The 401 Water Quality Certification is conditioned so that the project must comply with the above water quality standards.</p>
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	<p>long black snake crossed our path as well which is another concern for tourists and residents that are expecting safe access to the beach and not a tour through the everglades.</p> <p>This black stagnant water is a health risk for contact and is an absolute breeding ground for sometimes deadly mosquitos which can cause serious health issues by transmitting viruses like West Nile and Eastern Equine Encephalitis, and La crosse Encephalitis.</p> <p>I appreciate your time and consideration to read this, to consider the health and safety risks this water creates in this area that could cause harm to beach-goers just expecting to enjoy a day in the sand and the sun”.</p>	
5	One commenter stated “I believe you should leave the tidal pool alone. There is marine life in there”.	Comment noted.
6	One commentor stated “Since you're gonna' be controlling public contact with open water areas to minimize drowning risk, please also fill in that big pond that has the wave action”.	The 401 Water Quality Certification is conditioned so that the project must comply with the above water quality standards. EPD only considers the project in the request.
7	One commenter stated “Please approve this project. As a land owner, we need to make sure the recommended fixes go into place. We the people of Beachview drive highly supp[o]rt this initiative”.	Comment noted.
8	One commenter states “Leave the beach natural! It's become that way for a reason, and unless you're planning on fixing the underlying reason it's probably just going to go back that way. Tides have naturally moved that beach around, And several decades ago the river at Goulds inlet used to run parallel to the beach. There's nothing to fix, Don't waste tens of millions of dollars destroying the beach”.	EPD’s review of the Request for 401 Water Quality Certification is based on Georgia Rule 391-3-6-.03 Designated Uses and Water Quality Standards as required by 40 CFR Part 121.5 of the Clean Water Act Section 401 to ensure that projects do not violate State water quality standards. The 401 Water Quality Certification is conditioned so that the project must comply with the above water quality standards.

9	One commenter stated “Wondering why just East Beach? The beach in front of the King and Prince, The Grand, Beach Club, is not even a beach anymore. Also the level of bacteria in those tide pools is terrible. Can the beaches not be dredged like they are in Florida on a consistent basis?”.	The 401 Water Quality Certification is conditioned so that the project must comply with the above water quality standards. EPD only considers the project in the request.
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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

Jeffrey W. Cown, Director

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Suite 1456, East Tower
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
404-656-4713

12/04/2025

Glynn County
Attn: Mr. Jason Hartman
1725 Reynolds Street
Brunswick, Georgia 31520

Re: Water Quality Certification
Public Notice SAS-2025-00643
East Beach Water Impoundment Project
Atlantic Ocean
Glynn County

Dear Mr. Hartman:

In accordance with Section 401 of the Federal Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1341, the State of Georgia has evaluated the East Beach Water Impoundment Project submitted by Glynn County, an applicant for a federal permit or license related to proposed activity in, on, or adjacent to the waters of the State of Georgia.

The State has examined the information regarding the East Beach Water Impoundment Project provided to it by Longleaf Consulting. In accordance with that information, the State of Georgia issues this Section 401 water quality certification to Glynn County. This Section 401 water quality certification is subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. To assure compliance with State water quality standards, the applicant shall conduct all activities in a manner that will assure water quality adequate or necessary to protect and maintain designated uses. 33 U.S.C. § 1313(a)-(d); O.C.G.A. § 12-5-23(c)(2),(6),(9),(15); Ga. Comp. R. and Regs. 391-3-6-.03(2)(i), (ii).
 - a. To prevent or avoid degradation of water quality downstream, the applicant shall implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) that have been approved for in-water use to the extent practical and feasible, to minimize total suspended solids (TSS) and sedimentation for any work conducted within a state water or within the delineated boundaries of wetlands. 33 U.S.C. § 1313(a)-(d); O.C.G.A. § 12-5-23(c)(2), (6), (9), (15); O.C.G.A. § 12-5-29(a); O.C.G.A. §§ 12-7-6 to 7; Ga. Comp. R. and Regs. 391-3-6-.03(5).
 - b. In order to prevent or avoid violations of state water quality standards, the applicant must ensure that any fill placed in state waters must be clean fill that is free of solid waste, toxic, or hazardous contaminants. 33 U.S.C. §§ 1311; 1313(a)-(d); O.C.G.A. § 12-5-23(c)(2), (6), (9), (15); O.C.G.A. § 12-5-29(a); Ga. Comp. R. and Regs. 391-3-6-.03(5), (6), (11), (14)-(16).

East Beach Water Impoundment Project
SAS-2025-00643
Glynn County

2. To prevent sedimentation of state waters, the applicant shall ensure that it obtains coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction for discharges comprised of storm water associated with construction activity and any required land disturbing activity permits intended to prevent soil erosion, sedimentation, and deposition into waters of the state. 33 U.S.C. § 1342(p); O.C.G.A. § 12-5-30; O.C.G.A. §§ 12-7-6 to 7; Ga. Comp. R. and Regs. 391-3-6-.06; Ga. Comp. R. and Regs. 391-3-6-.16
3. Modifications to this Project may require an amendment to these conditions. Accordingly, the applicant must notify the Georgia Environmental Protection Division of any modifications to the proposed activity including, but not limited to, modifications to the construction or operation of any facility, or any new, updated, or modified applications for federal permits or licenses for the Project. 33 U.S.C. §§ 1311-1313; O.C.G.A. § 12-5-23(c)(2),(6),(9),(15); Ga. Comp. R. and Regs. 391-3-6-.03.

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division may invalidate or revoke this certification for failure to comply with any of these terms or conditions. This certification does not waive any other permit or other legal requirement applicable to this project or relieve the applicant of any obligation or responsibility for complying with the provisions of any other federal, state, or local laws, ordinances, or regulations.

It is your responsibility to submit this certification to the appropriate federal agency. If you have any questions regarding this certification, please contact David Hedeem by email at david.hedeem@dnr.ga.gov or by phone at 470-427-2730.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey W. Cown, Director
Environmental Protection Division

cc: Mr. Jared Chrisp, Corps
Mr. Eric Somerville, EPA
Mr. Peter Maholland, FWS
Ms. Kelie Moore, CRD
Mr. Stephen Bailey, Longleaf