



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

Jeffrey W. Cown, Director

EPD Director's Office  
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive  
Suite 1456, East Tower  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
404-656-4713

Jan 22, 2026

Ms. Amber Phillips, State Environmental Administrator  
Georgia Department of Transportation  
Office of Environmental Services  
600 W. Peachtree Street, NW, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Atlanta, Georgia 30308  
**Attention: Sarah Kriigel**

Re: Request for Variance under the Provisions of O.C.G.A. § 12-7-6(b)(15)  
GDOT Project - PI # 0017231  
SR 11/SR 22/US 129 SB & NB at Sand Creek  
Jones County

Dear Ms. Phillips:

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has reviewed your stream buffer variance application for the above-referenced project. The review was conducted to consider the potential impacts of the proposed project's encroachment on buffers to State waters within the context of Georgia's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permits for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities. This review, and the variance granted herein, is limited to only the request(s) in the application that you submitted for permission to conduct land-disturbing activities within 25-foot areas located immediately adjacent to the banks of State waters where vegetation has been wrested by normal stream flow or wave action. To the extent that your buffer variance application includes a request to conduct land-disturbing activities within 25-feet of State waters where there is no vegetation that has been wrested by normal stream flow or wave action, such request has not been considered by EPD, and the related activity is not addressed in the variance granted herein.

Pursuant to Ga. Comp. R. and Regs. 391-3-7-.05(2)(a) and subject to the conditions and contingencies described further below, authorization is hereby granted to encroach within the 25-foot buffer adjacent to State waters as delineated in your application, dated December 4, 2025. ***Buffer impacts authorized by this variance must be completed within five years of the date of this approval letter. If the approved buffer impacts cannot be completed prior to the expiration date, a time extension request must be submitted to EPD in writing at least 90 calendar days prior to the expiration date and must demonstrate justifiable cause for the extension.***

Authorization for the above-referenced project is subject to the following conditions and contingencies:

- 1) All graded slopes 3:1 or greater within the buffer encroachment areas must be hydroseeded and covered with Georgia DOT approved wood fiber matting or coconut fiber matting. If not hydroseeded, Georgia DOT approved matting that has been incorporated with seed and

fertilizer must be used. All slopes must be properly protected until a permanent vegetative stand is established;

- 2) The amount of land cleared during construction must be kept to a minimum;
- 3) All disturbed areas must be seeded, fertilized and mulched as soon as the final grade is achieved. Also, these disturbed areas must be protected until permanent vegetation is established; and
- 4) Georgia DOT type "C" silt fence or an approved high performance silt fence must be installed on the site perimeter wherever the stormwater may be discharged, and a double row must be installed between the land disturbing activities and State waters where appropriate.

The granting of this approval does not relieve you of any obligation or responsibility for complying with the provisions of any other law or regulations of any federal, local or additional State authority, nor does it obligate any of the aforementioned to permit this project if they do not concur with its concept of development/control. If you have questions concerning this letter, please contact Jacob Kelley, Erosion and Sedimentation Control Unit, Nonpoint Source Program, at (470) 531-2938.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey W. Cown  
Director

JWC: jk

BV-084-25-01

cc: Jaime Collazo, GDOT Senior Ecology Team Leader  
Vernisha Walker, GDOT Project Manager  
Grace Hall, GDOT Environmental Analyst  
Daryl Williams, GDOT ECB  
Lisa Westberry, GDOT Mitigation  
EPD-GDOT Inbox  
GDOT IOEQ  
GDOT Environmental Inbox  
Robert (Bobby) Dollar, GDOT Environmental Program Manager  
Carla Benton-Hooks, GDOT Environmental Program Manager  
Quinn Hiers, Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. Ecologist  
Collin Lane, Edwards-Pitman Environmental, Inc. Ecology Group Manager  
Tilden Bembry, GA EPD West Central District (Macon)

Ms. Amber Phillips

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Mitch Attaway, GSWCC

Hunter Roop, Region 3

Chris Weidner, Jones County Commission Chairman