



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

January 26, 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 Kelehear**

Re: Request for Variance under the Provisions of O.C.G.A. § 12-7-6(b)(17)  
GDOT Project - PI # 0016566  
City Street 140/Old Still Road at Crooked River  
Camden 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 buffer variance application for permission to conduct land-disturbing activities within 25-foot buffer along coastal marshlands as measured horizontally from the coastal marshland-upland interface in accordance with the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act.

Pursuant to Ga. Comp. R. and Regs. 391-3-7-.11(2)(a) & (h) 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, November 24, 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;
- 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;
- 5) The applicant must purchase 0.8 tidal wetland mitigation credits from within the Primary Service Area (SSA) serving the same 8-digit HUC as the buffer impacts and the sales receipt verifying the credit purchase shall be forwarded to the EPD by return receipt certified mail (or similar service) or delivery receipt email by the applicant to document buffer mitigation compliance at least 14 days prior to any land disturbance on site. Proof of delivery and receipt is the applicant's responsibility; and
- 6) Before you may conduct any land-disturbing activity in the buffer areas, you must: a) receive authorization from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to act under an individual, regional, or nationwide permit issued pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act; and b) at least 14 days prior to any land disturbance on site, submit to EPD a copy of that authorization by return receipt certified mail (or similar service) or delivery receipt email. Proof of delivery and receipt is the applicant's responsibility.

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

CMV-020-25-01

cc: Rhonda Hines, GDOT Project Manager  
Grace Hall, GDOT Environmental Analyst  
GDOT Environmental Inbox

Ms. Amber Phillips

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EPD-GDOT Inbox

Daryl Williams, GDOT ECB

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GDOT IOEQ Inbox

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Sarah Kelehear, GDOT Ecologist

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Beth Stevenson, GA EPD Coastal District (Brunswick)

Mitch Attaway, GSWCC

Tim Barrett, Region 6 Fisheries

Ben Casey, Camden County Commission Chairman