

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION
PUBLIC NOTICE
WATERSHED PROTECTION BRANCH

May 5, 2026
Notice Issue Date

Douglas, Cobb, and Fulton
City / County

June 3, 2026
Notice Close Date

SAS-2020-00187
Control Number

Sec. 401 Water Quality Certification

Interstate (I)-285 at I-20 West Interchange Reconstruction & Widening - US Army Corps of Engineers Sec. 404
Permit Application

This notice is issued to inform the public that a request has been received for water quality certification (WQC) in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act. The public is invited to comment during this 30-day period on the proposed activity. Information pertaining to the project is attached to this notice. Since the request is specific to 401 WQC, only comments pertaining to water quality are considered under the certification review process. Comments may be submitted via e-mail to: EPD.GDOT@dnr.ga.gov. Comments may also be provided in writing to: Program Manager, Nonpoint Source Program, Erosion and Sedimentation Control, 2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SW, Suite 1452 East, Atlanta, GA 30334. Include the words "Water Quality Certification Comment" and the Control Number above in the e-mail subject line or on the top of the first page of written comments to ensure that your comments will be forwarded to the appropriate staff. For additional information, contact Jonathan Calabria-Russell at Jonathan.calabria-russell@dnr.ga.gov.

Type of Permit Application: 401 Water Quality Certification

Applicable Law: Federal Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. § 1341

Applicable Rules: 40 CFR part 121

Description and Location of Proposed Activity:

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) TIA is seeking a Section 401 Water Quality Certification for activities associated with a road widening project of Interstate (I)-285 in Douglas, Cobb, and Fulton Counties, Georgia. The approximately 6-mile project is in Middle Chattahoochee-Lake Harding watershed (HUC 03130002) with its midpoint at (33.769919, -84.539391). As proposed in the April 8, 2026 Request for 401 WQC, the project includes the reconstruction of the I285/I-20 West interchange in the City of Atlanta in Fulton County and widening of I-20 between the interchange and Factory Shoals Road in Cobb County.

The project, as currently proposed, requires a USACE Section 404 permit and entails permanently impacting 0.236 acres of wetlands and 3,836 linear feet (1.149 acres) of streams. In addition, the project would temporarily impact 365 linear feet (0.09 acre) of stream for the reconstruction of the I-285/I-20 West interchange. To offset the loss in aquatic function associated with the above impacts, the applicant has proposed the purchase of 1,313.5 2018 Credits (12,326.4 Legacy Credits) for proposed stream impacts and 0.19 2018 Credits (1.52 Legacy Credits) for proposed wetland impacts would be purchased from a USACE approved mitigation bank servicing the Middle Chattahoochee – Lake Harding watershed (HUC 03130002). The purchase of credits has not yet been completed.

Name and Address of Permit Applicant:

Ms. Amber Phillips
Georgia Department of Transportation
Office of Environmental Services
600 W. Peachtree Street, NW, 16th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30308



Russell R. McMurry, P.E., Commissioner
One Georgia Center
600 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, GA 30308
(404) 631-1000 Main Office

April 8, 2026

Brian Kent, Program Manager
Environmental Protection Division
2 MLK, Jr. Dr. S.W., Suite 1462
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
ATTN: Michael Berry

Re: Request for 401 Water Quality Certification Application for GDOT Project PI#
0013918
Douglas, Cobb & Fulton Counties
Interstate (I)-285 at I-20 West Interchange Reconstruction & Widening
SAS-2020-00187

Dear Mr. Kent,

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) requests Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GEPD) issuance of Water Quality Certification pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) for the above referenced project. GDOT submitted an Individual Section 404 Permit application to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for the project on February 4, 2026. GDOT notified GEPD with a request for a pre-filing meeting via email dated December 11, 2025. Per the CWA Section 401 Certification Rule, this certification request contains all seven requirements outlined in section 121.5 (b) for an individual permit.

GDOT is the project proponent seeking certification. The GDOT State Environmental Administrator, Amber Phillips, is serving as a point of contact (aphillips@dot.ga.gov and 404-631-1000).

(1) Project PI# 0013918 proposes to reconstruct the I-285/I-20 west interchange in the City of Atlanta in Fulton County and widen I-20 between the interchange and Factory Shoals Road in Cobb County. The proposed project extends approximately 6 miles, beginning approximately 5 miles west of the I-285/I-20 west interchange and ending 1 mile east of the interchange. Along I-285, the project extends a total length of 2.4 miles, approximately 1.5 miles north of the I-285/I-20 west interchange and 0.9 miles south of the interchange. The total disturbed acreage of the project would be approximately 495 acres. The project is needed due to heavy traffic demand, geometric

design issues and high crash rates. The purpose of this project is to improve safety, access and mobility in Atlanta by including lane widening improvements along I-20.

(2) Attached is a table that documents each aquatic resource impact and its GPS coordinates.

(3) Attached is a figure that illustrates the site boundary and all associated aquatic resources.

(4) The current site conditions consist of mixed hardwood/pine forest, roadway/paved surface, open field/rights-of-way (ROW), residential/commercial properties, scrub habitat, large infestations of invasive species, and aquatic resources. Attached is a photolog documenting current site conditions.

(5) Proposed activity is anticipated to begin in June 2026 and will be completed in September 2030.

(6) A list of all other federal, interstate, tribal, state, territorial or local agency authorizations required for the proposed project, including all approvals and denials already received, is outlined in the following table:

Issuing Agency	Type Approval	PI#	Date/Application	Date/Approval
FHWA	NEPA EA/FONSI	0013918	February 9, 2024	February 14, 2024
GEPD	Buffer Variance	0013918	Pending	Pending
GEPD	NPDES Permit-NOI Segment 1 (GAR254403)	0013918	October 17, 2025	October 31, 2025
GEPD	NPDES Permit-NOI Segment 2 (GAR2542DE)	0013918	March 17, 2025; September 17, 2025	April 1, 2025; October 1, 2025
USACE	Individual Permit	0013918	February 4, 2026	Pending
USFWS	Section 7 ESA Concurrence	0013918	April 30, 2021; July 13, 2023; November 18, 2025	June 4, 2021; August 29, 2023; Pending
USFWS	FWCA Concurrence	0013918	April 30, 2021; July 13, 2023	June 4, 2021 August 29, 2023
GA HPD (SHPO)	Section 106 NHPA Concurrence of Findings	0013918	June 24, 2020; May 5, 2021	July 14, 2020; May 21, 2021

Key: FHWA – Federal Highway Administration, NEPA - National Environmental Policy Act, USFWS – United States Fish and Wildlife Service, ESA – Endangered Species Act, GA HPD – Georgia Historic Preservation Division, SHPO – State Historic Preservation Office, NHPA – National Historic Preservation Act, USACE – United States Army Corps of Engineers

Brian Kent
GDOT PI No. 0013918
April 8, 2026

(7) Attached is the email dated December 11, 2025, from GDOT to GEPD documenting that a pre-filing meeting request was submitted to the certifying authority at least 30 days prior to submitting the certification request.

Please copy the GDOT Ecologist, Environmental Analyst, and the USACE Project Manager on any future correspondence. If you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact GDOT P3 Support Service Ecologist Pierce Nordone at 404-304-5128 (pinordone@dot.ga.gov) or GDOT P3 Support Service Ecology Team Leader Katherine Zornig at 404-946-5778 (kzornig@dot.ga.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amber Phillips" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Amber Phillips
State Environmental Administrator

AM/KZ/js
Enclosure

cc:

Donald Stull, GDOT Project Manager
Elliot Robertson, GDOT Environmental Analyst (erobertson@dot.ga.gov)
Jillian Bostwick, P3 Support Services Environmental Analyst (jbostwick@hntb.com)
Daryl Williams, GDOT ECB
Lisa Westberry, GDOT Mitigation
GDOT IOEQ Inbox (IOEQsubmittals@dot.ga.gov)
EPD-GDOT Inbox (epd.gdot@dnr.ga.gov)
Nicole Liette, USACE Project Manager
Eric Somerville, EPA
Jeremy Smith, WSP

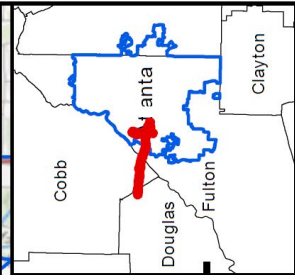
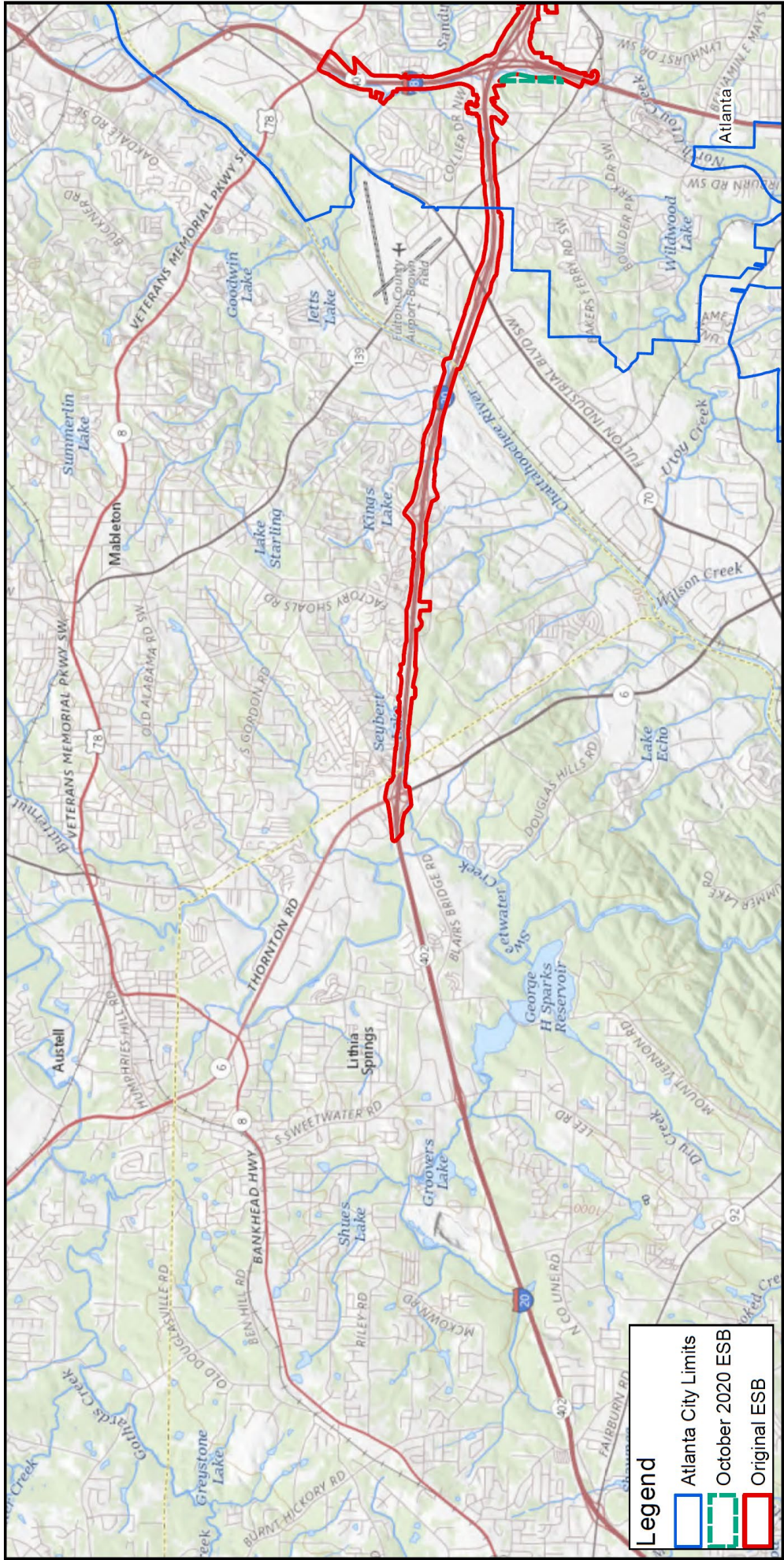


Figure 1. Project Vicinity Map

I-285 @ I-20 West Side Interchange
 Reconstruction & Widening
 Cobb, Douglas, and Fulton Counties
 PI No. 0013918



Version Date: December 3, 2020

