



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, SAVANNAH DISTRICT
100 W. OGLETHORPE AVENUE
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401-3604

AUGUST 23, 2024

Regulatory Division
SAS-2015-00235

Mr. Hugh "Trip" Tollison
Savannah Harbor-Interstate 16 Corridor Joint Development Authority
131 Hutchinson Island Road, 4th Floor
Savannah, Georgia 31421

Mr. Pat Wilson, Commissioner
Georgia Department of Economic Development
Technology Square, 75 5th Street, N.W., Suite 1200
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Dear Mr. Tollison & Mr. Wilson:

I am writing in reference to Department of the Army (DA) permit SAS-2015-00235 proffered on October 4, 2022. The project site is located south of the intersection of Georgia Highway 280 and Interstate 16, in Ellabell, Bryan County, Georgia (Latitude 32.1584, Longitude -81.4533). The permit authorized permanent impacts to 221.36 acres of wetland, 763 linear feet of intermittent stream and 1.58 acres of ditch associated with the construction of an Electric Vehicle Original Equipment Manufacturing (EVOEM) facility, which would manufacture and distribute fully electric vehicles.

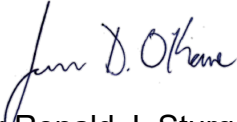
During our evaluation, and in accordance with 404(b)(1) regulations found at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 230.50, we determined that the project would result in negligible impacts on municipal and private water supplies, and that no water withdrawal permits would be required from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division (Georgia EPD). This determination was made in reliance on the information you provided during our review of your application. However, in July 2024, the Georgia EPD Watershed Protection Branch released four draft groundwater withdrawal permits for Bryan County and Bulloch County (Georgia EPD permit Nos. 016-0013 and 016-0014) associated with this project. According to Georgia EPD, Bulloch County has submitted an application for two Floridan aquifer wells sited in Bulloch County, asking for up to 3.125 million gallons per day (mgd) on an annual average and Bryan County has also submitted an application for two Floridan aquifer wells sited in Bulloch County, asking for up to 3.500 mgd on an annual average. Further, Georgia EPD anticipates a drawdown of the aquifer in response to the above water withdrawals.

Our regulations stipulate that this office may reevaluate a permit decision at any time the circumstances warrant (33 CFR 325.7(a)). Circumstances that could require reevaluation include, but are not limited to, (1) failure to comply with the terms and conditions of a permit; (2) information submitted in support of a permit application proves to have been false, incomplete, or inaccurate and/or (3) significant new information surfaces which this office did not consider in reaching the original public interest decision (33 CFR Part 325, Appendix A).

Based on the release of the Georgia EPD draft permits, the Corps has determined that new information has surfaced regarding the effects the project may have on municipal and private water supplies, and that reevaluation of our permit decision regarding our effects determination for water supply is warranted. To aid in our reevaluation, please provide an assessment of effects the project may have on municipal and private water supplies, including whether the anticipated drawdown of the Floridan aquifer would result in any drainage of aquatic resources. This assessment should include any groundwater and surface water modeling/data that has been collected regarding this issue. Please note, should the Corps determine that the project would result in additional impacts to aquatic resources, the Corps may modify the permit to include special conditions to compensate for these impacts pursuant to 33 CFR 325.7(b).

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter within 10 days confirming that you will provide us with the requested information.

If you have any further questions or concerns pertaining to this matter, please feel free to call Sarah Wise, Lead Biologist, Coastal Branch, at (912) 652-5550 or by email at sarah.e.wise@usace.army.mil.


For Ronald J. Sturgeon, PE
U.S. Army
Commanding

Enclosures