

Public Notice – Environmental Permit

Purpose of notice: To seek public comment on a draft permit from the Department of Environmental Quality that will allow the filling of wetlands and streams in association with the construction of improvements to US Route 460 in the counties of Southampton, Isle of Wight, and the City of Suffolk, Virginia.

Public comment period: For 30 days, starting from the day after the notice is in the newspaper: July 22, 2016 to August 22, 2016.

Permit name: Virginia Water Protection Permit issued by DEQ, under the authority of the State Water Control Board

Applicant Name, address and permit number: Virginia Department of Transportation; Attn: Angel Deem
1401 E. Broad Street Richmond, VA 23219; VWPP No. 15-1582

Project description: The Virginia Department of Transportation has applied for a new permit for the Route 460 Project Southeast Virginia. Construction is proposed to upgrade existing U.S. Route 460, from approximately one mile west of Zuni to two miles west of Windsor, to a four-lane divided highway. From approximately two miles west of Windsor to the Route 460/Route 58 interchange in Suffolk, the applicant proposes to construct a new four lane divided highway that would run north around Windsor, then east of Windsor running south of existing Route 460. The proposed permit will allow the applicant to fill or otherwise alter wetlands and streams. The proposed activity would permanently affect 44.45 acres of surface waters, comprised of non-tidal wetlands, ditches, open water and streambed. Permanent non-tidal impacts to wetlands are comprised of 23.13 acres of palustrine forested wetlands (PFO), 1.41 acres of palustrine scrub-shrub wetlands (PSS), 5.48 acres of palustrine emergent wetlands (PEM) and 3.93 acres of palustrine open water. Impacts due to permanent conversion to PEM are comprised of 5.76 acres of PFO/PSS for right of way clearing and 4 acres of PFO for bridging. The remaining 0.74 acre of permanent impact is comprised of 6,874 linear feet of stream channel, 9,339 linear feet of jurisdictional ditch and 789 linear feet of pipe replacement. The activity proposed in the permit will affect the Blackwater River, Ennis Pond and their unnamed tributaries, Burnt Mills Swamp and an Unnamed Tributary to Eley Swamp, located in the Albemarle-Chowan and James River watersheds. The applicant plans to compensate for the affected areas, through the purchase of 8,873 stream credits, application of 45.7 previously purchased wetland mitigation bank credits, restoration of 20.99 acres of degraded bald cypress-tupelo and bottomland hardwood wetlands, and preservation of 100 acres of mature bald cypress-tupelo wetlands, all in the Blackwater River and Hampton Roads sub-basins. DEQ's preliminary decision is to issue the permit.

HOW TO COMMENT AND/OR REQUEST A PUBLIC HEARING: DEQ accepts comments and requests for public hearing by e-mail, fax or postal mail. All comments and requests must be in writing and be received by DEQ during the comment period. Submittals must include the names, mailing addresses and telephone numbers of the commenter/requester and of all persons represented by the commenter/requester. A request for public hearing must also include: 1) The reason why a public hearing is requested. 2) A brief, informal statement regarding the nature and extent of the interest of the requester or of those represented by the requestor, including how and to what extent such interest would be directly and adversely affected by the permit. 3) Specific references, where possible, to terms and conditions of the permit with suggested revisions. A public hearing may be held, including another comment period, if public response is significant, based on individual requests for a public hearing, and there are substantial, disputed issues relevant to the permit.

Contact for public comments, document requests and additional information: Nina O'Malley; Central Office, PO BOX 1105, Richmond, Virginia, 23218; Phone: 804-698-4067; E-mail: nina.omalley@deq.virginia.gov; Fax: (804) 698-4032. The public may review the draft permit and application at the DEQ office named above by appointment or may request copies of the documents from the contact person listed above.