



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
Baltimore District

Public Notice

In Reply to Application Number
**NAB-2019-62064 (Somerset County Sanitary District Smith Island
Clean Water Project/Utility Line)**

PN 20-36

Comment Period: June 17, 2020 to July 8, 2020

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLIC NOTICE IS TO INFORM INTERESTED PARTIES OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY AND TO SOLICIT COMMENTS. NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE AS TO WHETHER OR NOT A PERMIT WILL BE ISSUED AT THIS TIME.

This District has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 USC 403) and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1344), as described below:

APPLICANT: Somerset County Sanitary District, Inc.
11916 Somerset Avenue
Princess Anne, Maryland 21853

WATERWAY AND LOCATION OF THE PROPOSED WORK:

The proposed project is located in Rhodes Point Gut, between Rhodes Point and Tylerton on Smith Island, Somerset County, Maryland.

Tylerton: Latitude: 37.96639, Longitude: -76.02417
Rhodes Point: Latitude: 37.97111, Longitude: -76.04167

OVERALL PROJECT PURPOSE:

To provide improved sewer utility to Smith Island, Somerset County, Maryland.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

To install a 4-inch diameter by approximately 5,225-foot subaqueous force main as follows: to install 600 feet of 4-inch diameter high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe via horizontal directional drilling (HDD); to install approximately 3,875 feet of 4-inch diameter HDPE pipe via trench or jet plow method; to install approximately 750 feet of 4-inch diameter HDPE pipe via HDD; and to construct a 4-foot wide by 4-foot long triangular platform, elevated 4 feet above the mudflat substrate, all permanently impacting approximately 3,135 linear feet of tidal open water, temporarily impacting approximately 28,730 square feet across 2,210 linear feet of tidal open water, permanently impacting approximately 16 square feet of tidal wetlands, and temporarily impacting approximately 34,995 square feet of tidal wetlands. Approximately 34,697 square feet of submerged aquatic vegetation habitat would be temporarily impacted during the pipe installation via trench or jet plow method.

The work includes temporary installation of timber matting and excavated HDD return pits in tidal wetlands. The excavated materials would be stored on barges or in other upland areas and used to back fill once installation is complete. The HDPE pipe installation via HDD would be installed a maximum of 25 feet below the bottom substrate under the Rhodes Point to Tylerton federal navigation channel and the HDPE pipe installation via trench or jet plow method would be installed approximately 100 feet alongside the federal navigation channel.

Please refer to the table below for a summary of aquatic resource impacts.

EFFECTS ON AQUATIC RESOURCES:

Activity	Stream Impact (lf)	Wetland Impact (Sq. Ft.)	Authority (Section 10/404/408)
Pipe Installation (trench/jet plow and backfill)	2,210 linear feet 28,730 Square Feet	20,995	Section 10/404
Pipe Installation (HDD)	925	168	Section 10/408 (Stream Impacts Only)
HDD return pits	0	8,000	Section 404
Platform/lift station	0	16	Section 10
Temporary Matting	0	6,000	Section 404

LEAD FEDERAL AGENCY: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as the lead federal agency, is responsible for all coordination pursuant to applicable federal authorities. The United States Department of Agriculture, as a partial funding agency, is the lead federal agency for coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and with the Maryland Historical Trust under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSED AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND COMPENSATORY

MITIGATION: As part of the planning process for the proposed project, steps were taken to ensure avoidance and minimization of impacts to aquatic resources to the maximum extent practicable based on the existing site conditions. The applicant proposes the most direct path for the sewer line. The line would be installed via trenching or jet plowing and HDD where possible.

The applicant did not propose any compensatory mitigation. Impacts to the above ground aquatic resources would be temporary in nature. Once the pipeline is installed, temporary access mats would be removed, wetlands vegetation would be replanted over the right-of-way as necessary, and submerged aquatic vegetation would be allowed to naturally recolonize.

CORPS EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS:

This project will be evaluated pursuant to Corps Regulatory Program Regulations (33 CFR Parts 320-332). The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonable may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economic, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, and consideration of property ownership and in general, the needs and welfare of the people. The evaluation of the impact of this project will also include application of the Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: A preliminary review of this application indicates that the proposed work is not likely to adversely affect Federally-listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat, pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, as amended. As the evaluation of this application continues, additional information may become available which could modify this preliminary determination.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 04-267), requires all Federal agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), including species of concern, life cycle habitat, or Habitat Areas of Particular Concern. The project site lies in or adjacent to EFH as described under MSFCMA for managed species under the MSFCMA. The Baltimore District has made a preliminary determination that the project will not have a substantial adverse effect on EFH. The Baltimore District has made a preliminary determination that mitigative measures are not required to minimize adverse effects on EFH at this time. This determination may be modified if additional information indicates otherwise.

HISTORIC RESOURCES:

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and applicable guidance, the Corps has reviewed the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places and initially determined that no registered properties listed as eligible for inclusion, therein, are located at the site of the proposed work. The Corps has made the preliminary determination that the proposed project has no potential to cause effects on historic properties. The Corps final eligibility and effect determination will be based on coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office as appropriate and required, and with full consideration given to the proposed undertaking's potential direct and indirect effects on historic properties within the Corps' identified permit area.

TRIBAL RESOURCES: Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act also requires federal agencies to consult with federally-recognized American Indian tribes that attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties that may be affected by the agency's undertaking. Corps Tribal Consultation Policy mandates an open, timely, meaningful, collaborative, and effective deliberative communication process that emphasizes trust, respect, and shared responsibility. The policy further emphasizes that, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, consultation works toward mutual consensus and begins at the earliest planning stages, before decisions are made and actions taken. The Corps final eligibility and effect determination will be based on coordination with interested tribes, in accordance with the Corps current tribal standard operating procedures as appropriate and required, and with full consideration given to the proposed undertaking's potential direct and indirect effects on tribal resources.

MODIFICATION OF CIVIL WORKS PROJECTS: 33 USC 408 (SECTION 408): All Section 408 proposals will be coordinated internally at USACE. The Section 408 decision will be issued along with the Section 404 and/or Section 10 decision. Please see the following link for more information regarding Section 408: <https://www.nab.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/Section-408-Requests/>.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: The applicant is required to obtain a water quality certification in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS: Where applicable, the applicant has certified in this application that the proposed activity complies with and will be conducted in a manner consistent with the approved Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program. By this public notice, we are requesting the State concurrence or objection to the applicant's consistency statement.

The applicant must obtain any State or local government permits which may be required.

SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS: The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments provided will become part of the public record for this action and are subject to release to the public through the Freedom of Information Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Written comments concerning the work described above related to the factors listed above or other pertinent factors must be received by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District within the comment period specified above through postal mail at the address below or electronic submission to the project manager email address below. Written comments should reference the Application Number NAB-2019-62064 (SO Sanitary District Smith Island Clean Water Project/Utility Line)

PUBLIC HEARING REQUESTS: Any person who has an interest which may be adversely affected by the issuance of this permit may request a public hearing. The request, which must be in writing, must be received within the comment period as specified above to receive consideration. Also it must clearly set forth the interest which may be adversely affected by this activity and the manner in which the interest may be adversely affected. The public hearing request may be submitted by electronic mail or mailed to the following address:

Jessica Miller
(Jessica.d.miller@usace.army.mil)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District
Regulatory Branch
2 Hopkins Plaza
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

It is requested that you communicate this information concerning the proposed work to any persons known by you to be interested, who did not receive a copy of this notice.

General information regarding the Corps' permitting process can be found on our website at <https://www.nab.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>. This public notice has been prepared in accordance with Corps implementing regulations at 33 CFR 325.3. If you have any questions concerning this specific project, or would like to request a paper copy of this public notice, please contact Ms. Jessica Miller at Jessica.d.miller@us.army.mil or 410-822-8629. This public notice is issued by the Chief, Regulatory Branch.