Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard Designated Floodplain

To: All interested Agencies, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that the South Carolina Office of Resilience (SCOR) under 24 CFR Part 58 has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order(s) 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, and Executive Order 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Wetlands Protection. The activity is funded under HUD Community Development Block Grant – Mitigation (CDBG-MIT), HUD grant number B-18-DP-45-0001. The proposed project is located in Myrtle Beach, Horry County, and is located in the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain/wetland. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using the Climate-Informed Science Approach (CISA). This approach is the preferred method for determining the applicability of the regulations.

Project Details

Project Name: Horry County McCormick Road Improvements

Project Summary: The proposed project includes the construction of a new culvert to alleviate flood risk. A detailed description of the culvert and specific site can be found by utilizing the contact information below.

Project Location: Approximately 2,200 feet south of Forestbrook Road where the road crosses over the Socastee Swamp.

Project Designation: Non-Critical

Wetlands: This site includes 0.1 acres of riverine wetland that is classified as a Riverine system with a Lower Perennial subsystem that is an Unconsolidated Bottom class and it is Permanently Flooded.

FFRMS: The entire project site, approximately 0.5 acres, is an FFRMS floodplain based on Climate Informed Scientific Approach calculations.

Impact: A review of the project by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has determined that the project will result in minimal individual and cumulative adverse environmental effect and is not contrary to the public interest.

Estimated FFRMS Flood Elevation in 2070: 11 feet

Grant Information: CDBG-MIT - $846,450

Total Estimated Project Cost: $1,922,156

Floodplains and wetlands provide a wide range of benefits to the ecosystem and community that include: Flood storage and erosion control; water quality maintenance – reducing sediment loads, filtering nutrients and impurities, and moderating water temperature; biological productivity & habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife; as well as recreational opportunities and open space. Potential impacts to these benefits were weighed and analyzed throughout the 8-Step Decision Making Process and these impacts will either be negligible or more than adequately mitigated against, and in some instances the mitigation measures will improve the capacity of the floodplain over its pre-impact state.

The proposed project is not expected to have any impact on the floodplain and wetland. It is suitable for carrying out the mission of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) by providing necessary public infrastructure improvements to the community. Therefore, the proposed projects will not result in a negative impact to the interests of the surrounding population, the value of the watershed, or the ecological benefits of the floodplain.

SCOR has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial values of the existing floodplain/wetland. The proposed action must take place within the floodplain/wetland due to the following:

1. Alternative sites considered were also located within floodplains and wetlands and would lead to less optimal results
2. The nature of the project requires activities within wetlands and floodplains to create a safe and secure environment that addresses flooding.
3. Alternative sites or projects would be less cost effective and would not produce a better result.

Alternatives considered and reasons for alternative non-selection are as follow:

1. Alternative Mitigation Strategies – SCOR reviewed all general mitigation techniques to determine the best course of action. The alternatives included both direct and indirect measures.
    a. Direct Measures: This includes all options that would physically alter the environment.
        i. Flood Barriers: The construction of flood barriers between structures and the source of flooding was rejected because it would be incredibly complex and costly to project all structures along the impacted waterway. They would also require significant maintenance and would not adequately address the flood risk.
        ii. Flood Diversion: The creation of man-made channels to alter the flow of water was rejected due to the lack of potential diversion sites that would not impact major roadways or populated areas.
        iii. Flood Detention: The creation of overflow detention areas was rejected for reasons similar to flood diversion. The location does not adequately lend itself to the creation of detention basins without a significant impact on the environment and populated areas.
        iv. Elevation, Floodproofing, Relocation, and Reconstruction: These alternatives were considered in order to reduce the impact on physical structures. However, they are solely focused on structures currently in place and these alternatives would not address the overall need for greater flood protection. Additionally, they would be incredibly expensive, time consuming, and require the involvement of many public and private entities.
    b. Indirect Measures: Flood damage and risk can be reduced in some cases by taking action that does not directly impact the environment.
        i. Flood Warning and Alert Systems: SCOR determined that an improved flood warning system would not address the fundamental issues that this project is seeking to address.
        ii. Flood Insurance: Increasing the availability of flood insurance might help protect individuals with structures in the flood areas, but it does not address the high likelihood of flooding in the area.
        iii. Public Education and Awareness: Informing the public is a valuable tool to prevent harm to individuals and property. However, it does not actually prevent flooding or address the overall needs of the community.
2. Alternative Locations – In addition to alternative strategies, SCOR also considered an alternative location for the project. Fantasy Harbour Blvd was considered for a project site but was rejected because an analysis of the results showed that the impact of a culvert at that location would be relatively minor and would not meet the goals of the project.
3. No Action Alternative – Lastly, SCOR considered whether the project should be cancelled entirely, and no action taken. This was rejected due to the extremely high need in the area.

Mitigation measures taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial functions and intrinsic values of the existing floodplain wetland include incorporating Best Management Practices (BMPs) during construction to protect the wetlands and waterways from sediment and erosion.

This may include, but is not limited to, erosion controlling matting, mulch, silt fences, sediment tubes, and other devices. The BMPs will be maintained until the fill material is stabilized. Whenever applicable, the impact on wetlands and floodplains will be minimized to the maximum extent possible. This project is an improvements to the infrastructure and drainage system, which increases flow capacity of the floodplain.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued a Conditional Letter of Map Revision for the proposed action on April 7, 2025 (Case 24-04-1879R). This proposed action will comply with all local, state, and federal floodplain procedures.

SCOR has reevaluated alternatives to building in the floodplain/wetland and has determined that there is no practicable alternative to floodplain/wetland development. Environmental files documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690, and/or Executive Order 11990, are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and located delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in **floodplains and wetlands,** and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about **floodplains and wetland** can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in **floodplains and wetland**, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by SCOR at the following address on or before 11:59 PM on August 29, 2025.

Eric G. Fosmire, Chief of Staff and General Counsel (RE: HUD Environmental Review)
South Carolina Office of Resilience
632 Rosewood Drive
Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 832-8004

A full description of the project may also be reviewed from Monday-Friday 9am-4pm at the above address. Comments may also be submitted via email to eric.fosmire@scor.sc.gov.

Posting Date: August 14, 2025