

PROCESSING FORM FOR PROGRAMMATIC CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS  
NON MAJOR FEDERAL ACTIONS

Project ID P043789

Route US 278

County Jasper

Part 1 - Project Description

Include the Project Name/Description

US 278 Grays Highway Emergency Repairs (TS Debby)

This project proposes to repair the roadway damaged due to flooding caused by Tropical Storm Debby. The route is currently closed and a detour is in place. The proposed repair will be to construct a new bridge on alignment be constructed to comply with current design criteria.

Part 2 - PCE Type

Select the appropriate Categorical Exclusion from 23 CFR Part 771.117 that best fits the entire project from the drop-down menu. **Reference Appendix A of the PCE Agreement for a more detailed description of each CE contained in 23 CFR 771.117.**

23 CFR 771.117(c) Bridge rehabilitation, reconstruction, or replacement or railroad crossing improvements

23 CFR 771.117(d)

Part 3 - Thresholds

To be processed as a Programmatic Categorical Exclusion (PCE) the following conditions must be met in addition to the General Criteria (as outlined in the PCE Agreement between FHWA-SC and SCDOT). Place a "X" in the appropriate box below. If the answer is "Yes" to any of the below criteria, SCDOT will consult with FHWA-SC to determine the appropriate level of NEPA documentation required and forward to FHWA-SC for approval. **\*Reference Part 4 of the Processing form or Section IV of the PCE Agreement for more details and definitions regarding each threshold.**

1.	Involves any unusual circumstances as described in <u>*23 CFR Part 771.117(b)</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
2.	The acquisition of more than <u>*minor amounts</u> of temporary or permanent strips of right-of-way	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
3.	Involves acquisitions that result in residential or non-residential displacements	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
4.	Involves any adverse impacts to EJ populations	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## Part 3 - Thresholds Continued

5.	Results in capacity expansion of a roadway by adding through lanes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
6.	Involves construction that would result in <u>*major traffic disruptions</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
7.	Involves <u>*changes in access control</u> requiring FHWA approval	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
8.	An adverse effect determination under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
9.	Use of Section 4(f) property that cannot be documented with a FHWA <i>de minimis</i> determination or a programmatic Section 4(f) other than the programmatic evaluation for the use of historic bridges	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
10.	Any use of a Section 6(f) property	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
11.	Requires an Individual USACE 404 Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
12.	Requires an Individual U.S. Coast Guard Permit.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
13.	Work encroaching in a regulatory floodway, adversely affecting the base floodplain (100 yr.) pursuant to E.O. 11988 and 23 CFR Part 650 Subpart A	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
14.	Construction in, across, or adjacent to a river designated as a National Wild and Scenic River	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
15.	Involves an increase of 15 dBA or greater on any noise receptor or abatement measures are found to be feasible and reasonable due to noise impacts	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
16.	May affect and is likely to adversely affect a Federally listed species or designated critical habitat or projects with impacts subject to the BGEPA	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
17.	Involves acquisition of land for hardship, protective purposes, or early acquisition	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
18.	Does not meet the latest Conformity Determination for air quality non-attainment areas (if applicable).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
19.	Any known or potential <u>major</u> hazardous waste sites within the right-of-way.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
20.	Is not included in or is inconsistent with the STIP and/or TIP	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## Part 3 Continued - Additional criteria to be completed for disposal of excess right-of-way PCE

1.	Is the parcel part of a SCDOT environmental mitigation effort or could it be used for environmental mitigation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2.	Is there a formal plan to use this parcel for a future transportation project (is it part of an approved LRTP)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No



**Part 4 - Threshold Definitions**

**Unusual Circumstances (23 CFR Part 771.117)** - Unusual circumstances are defined as:

- a. Significant environmental impacts;
- b. Substantial controversy on environmental grounds;
- c. Significant impact on properties protected by Section 4(f) of the DOT ACT or Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; or
- d. Inconsistencies with any Federal, State, or local law, requirement, or administrative determination relating to the environmental aspects of the action.

**Minor Amount of Right-of-Way (ROW):**

A minor amount of ROW is defined as less than 3 acres per linear mile for linear projects or less than 10 acres of impacts for non-linear projects (eg: intersections, bridges), and no removal of major property improvements. Examples of major improvements include residential and business structures, or the removal of other features which would change the functional utility of the property. Removal of minor improvements, such as fencing, landscaping, sprinkler systems, and mailboxes would be allowed.

**Major Traffic Disruptions:**

A major traffic disruption is defined as an action that would result in: a) adverse effects to through-traffic businesses or schools, b) substantial change in environmental impacts, or c) public controversy associated with the use of the temporary road, detour, or ramp closure.

**Changes in Access Control:**

Requires approval from FHWA for changes in access control on the Interstate system (eg: Interchange Modification Reports or Interchange Justification Reports).

**Environmental Commitments: (Check all that apply)**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> USTs/Hazardous Materials             | <input type="checkbox"/> General Permit                | <input type="checkbox"/> Right of Way                                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Quality             | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Permit             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Floodplains                         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migratory Bird Treaty Act | <input type="checkbox"/> Essential Fish Habitat        | <input type="checkbox"/> Lead Based Paint                               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stormwater                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coast Guard Permit Exclusion         | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Standard Commitment (see below) |

Relevant field studies and environmental reviews have been completed to determine that the project meets the criteria set forth in the Programmatic Categorical Exclusion Agreement signed by FHWA-SC and SCDOT. It is understood that any additions/deletions to the project may void environmentally processing the project as presently classified; consequently, any engineering changes must be brought to the attention of SCDOT Environmental Services Office immediately. A copy of this form is included in the project file and one (1) copy has been provided to FHWA.

Approved By:

*Caycee Cleaver*

Date: Oct 30, 2024

Primavera:  Yes  No NEPA Start Date: Oct 29, 2024

Does the project contain additional commitments?: (if Yes attach to form)  Yes  No

Date: 10/29/2024



Project ID: P043789 County: Jasper District: District 6 Doc Type: PCE Total # of Commitments: 6

Project Name: US 278 Grays Highway Emergency Repairs (TS Debby)

The Environmental Commitment **Contractor Responsible** measures listed below **are to be included in the contract and must be implemented**. It is the responsibility of the Program Manager to make sure the Environmental Commitment **SCDOT Responsible** measures are adhered to. If there are questions regarding the commitments listed please contact:

**CONTACT NAME:** Tyler Clark **PHONE #:** (803)-737-4596

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS FOR THE PROJECT**

**Water Quality** NEPA Doc Ref: Responsibility: CONTRACTOR

The contractor will be required to minimize possible water quality impacts through implementation of BMPs, reflecting policies contained in 23 CFR 650B and the Department's Supplemental Specification on Erosion Control Measures (latest edition) and Supplemental Technical Specifications on Seeding (latest edition). Other measures including seeding, silt fences, sediment basins, etc. as appropriate will be implemented during construction to minimize impacts to water quality.

Special Provision

**Migratory Bird Treaty Act** NEPA Doc Ref: Responsibility: CONTRACTOR

The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, 16 USC § 703-711, states that it is unlawful to pursue, hunt, take, capture or kill; attempt to take, capture or kill; possess, offer to or sell, barter, purchase, deliver or cause to be shipped, exported, imported, transported, carried or received any migratory bird, part, nest, egg or product, manufactured or not. The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) will comply with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 in regard to the avoidance of taking of individual migratory birds and the destruction of their active nests.

The contractor shall notify the Resident Construction Engineer (RCE) at least four (4) weeks prior to construction/demolition/maintenance of bridges and box culverts. The RCE will coordinate with SCDOT Environmental Services Office (ESO), Compliance Division, to determine if there are any active birds using the structure. After this coordination, it will be determined when construction/demolition/maintenance can begin. If a nest is observed that was not discovered after construction/demolition/maintenance has begun, the contractor will cease work and immediately notify the RCE, who will notify the ESO Compliance Division. The ESO Compliance Division will determine the next course of action.

The use of any deterrents by the contractor designed to prevent birds from nesting, shall be approved by the RCE with coordination from the ESO Compliance Division. The cost for any contractor provided deterrents will be provided at no additional cost to SCDOT.

Special Provision

**Stormwater** NEPA Doc Ref: Responsibility: CONTRACTOR

Stormwater control measures, both during construction and post-construction, are required for SCDOT projects with land disturbance and/or constructed in the vicinity of 303(d), TMDL, ORW, tidal, and other sensitive waters in accordance with the SCDOT's MS4 Permit. The selected contractor would be required to minimize potential stormwater impacts through implementation of construction best management practices, reflecting policies contained in 23 CFR 650 B and SCDOT's Supplemental Specifications on Seed and Erosion Control Measures (latest edition).

Special Provision

Project ID: P043789

SCDOT  
NEPA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS  
FORM



**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS FOR THE PROJECT**

**Cultural Resources**

NEPA Doc Ref:

Responsibility:

CONTRACTOR

The contractor and subcontractors must notify their workers to watch for the presence of any prehistoric or historic remains, including but not limited to arrowheads, pottery, ceramics, flakes, bones, graves, gravestones, or brick concentrations during the construction phase of the project, if any such remains are encountered, the Resident Construction Engineer (RCE) will be immediately notified and all work in the vicinity of the discovered materials and site work shall cease until the SCDOT Archaeologist directs otherwise.

Special Provision

**Floodplains**

NEPA Doc Ref:

Responsibility:

CONTRACTOR

The Engineer of Record will send a set of final plans and request for floodplain management compliance to the local County Floodplain Administrator.

Special Provision

**Non-Standard Commitment**

NEPA Doc Ref:

Responsibility:

CONTRACTOR

Clearing Restrictions

Contractor is to be aware that the project is located in a region known to support Northern Long-eared Bats and other bat species. For this reason, tree felling is prohibited between December 15th –February 15th and April 1 – July 15. However, other activities associated with tree clearing operations (i.e., removal of felled trees, grubbing, etc) are allowed during this time period.

Special Provision



# Cultural Resources Project Screening Form

File Number:  PIN:  Route:  County:

Project Name:

Type 1: Resurfacing, installation of fencing, signs, pavement markings, traffic signals, passenger shelters, railroad warning devices, installation of rumble strips, and landscaping

Project Type

Type 2: Bridge replacements on alignment, construction of bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and intersection improvements

Type 3: Projects that do not fall into Type 1 and Type 2 categories (e.g. road widening)

## Comments

This project will replace the two culverts (Asset ID 1190 and 1191) carrying US 278 (Grays Hwy) over Beaverdam Branch which were damaged during Tropical Storm Debby. The culverts will be replaced on alignment and it is anticipated that new ROW will be required. The project area extends 75 ft from the roadway centerline and 500 ft from either end of the culverts. The archaeological survey examined the project area. The architectural survey examined the Area of Potential Effects (APE), which consisted of a 300-ft buffer around the project area. The APE was reviewed using ArchSite, Google Earth, Web Soil Survey, historic topographic maps, and aerial photographs. The review determined that the area has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources and no previously recorded historic properties are located within the APE. Web Soil Survey maps the majority of the soils within the project area (54%) as poorly drained. Forty-two percent of the soils are moderately well drained, and 4% are excessively drained. A cultural resources field survey, consisting of a pedestrian reconnaissance of the entire APE, augmented by the excavation of shovel tests, was conducted on 10-16-24. Shovel tests were excavated at 60 m intervals in areas of low probability, like poorly drained soils, and at 30 m intervals in areas of high probability. Eighteen shovel test locations were investigated. Of these, ten were not excavated due to a high degree of disturbance from roadside berms and ditches or wetland conditions. The remaining shovel tests were negative for cultural material. One resource was recorded. Red Hill Cemetery (38JA1277/SHPO Site No. 0515) is located on a rise 250 ft southeast of the southern culvert. This active cemetery has been used from the 1870s to the present. It is recommended not eligible for the NRHP, but is protected by state law. The cemetery will be avoided during construction. Although over 50 years old, both culverts were washed out during the storm and little of the structures remained. Therefore they were not recorded. No additional cultural resources investigations recommended.

Effect Determination:

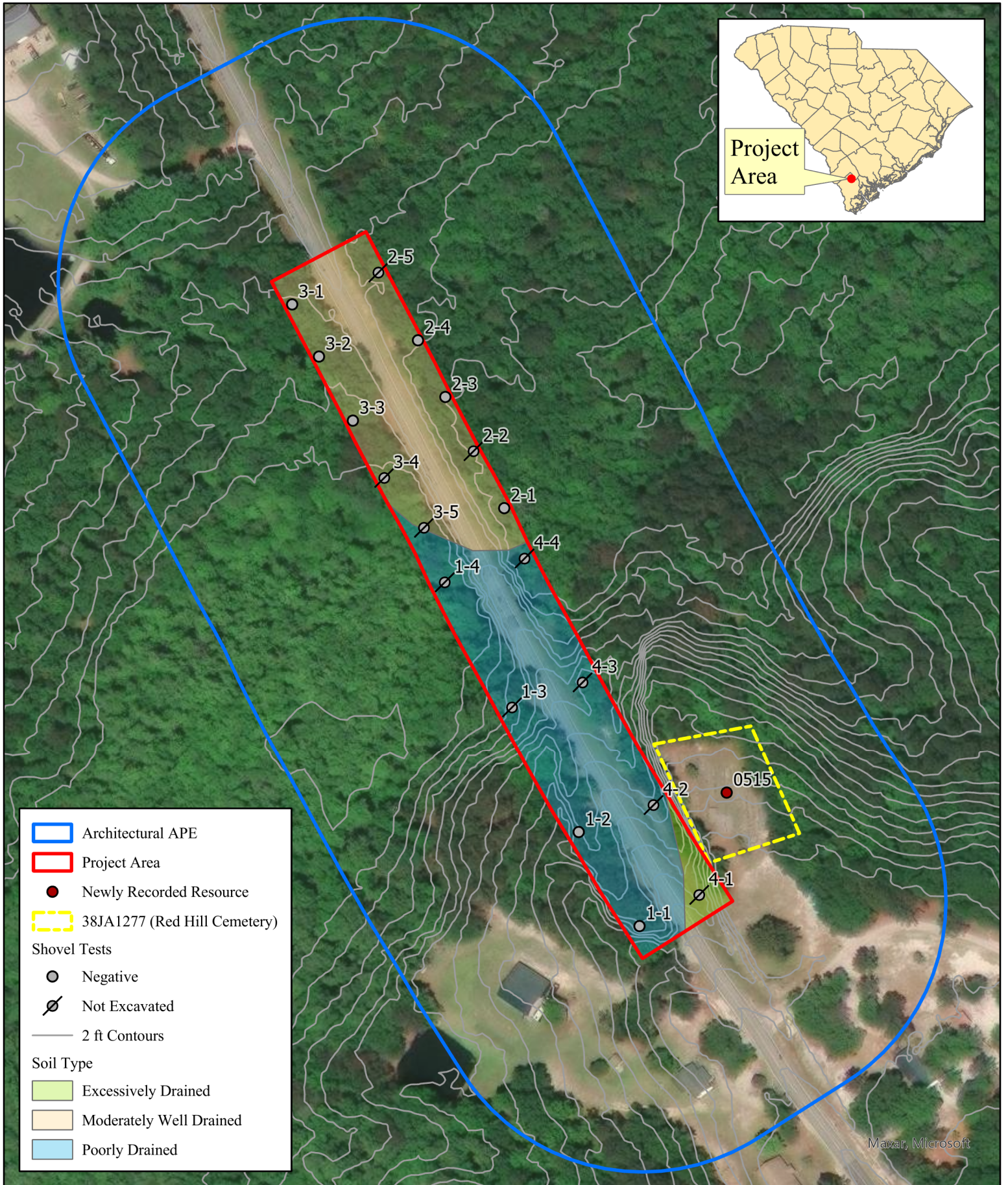
\*SHPO consultation is required for all Type 3 projects and any project with a No Adverse or Adverse Effect Determination.

This screening form was developed to satisfy documentation requirements for Type I and Type II projects under a Programmatic Agreement between the Federal Highway Administration, the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the South Carolina Department of Transportation. For Type I and Type II projects that have no effect on historic properties, the completion of this screening form with supporting documentation (e.g. ArchSite Map) provides evidence of FHWA and SCDOT's compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

Prepared by:

Review Date:







# Biological Assessment Report

**US 278 over Beaverdam Branch  
Culvert Replacement Project**

**Jasper County, SC**

**SCDOT Project ID: P043789**

**IPaC Project Code: 2025-0006419**

**October 22, 2024**

Prepared By: Chris Beckham

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## 1. Project Overview

### 1.1 Introduction

A biological assessment is an evaluation of the condition of project areas and determining the presence of federally listed species, species proposed for listing, and candidate species as well as designated and proposed critical habitat. The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) is required to determine whether our actions may or may not affect the species and critical habitats in the area and areas surrounding the proposed project.

### 1.2 Federal Nexus

The purpose of this biological assessment (BA) is to address the effect of the US 278 culvert replacement on the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species, or their designated critical habitat. Species listed in Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act are under the jurisdiction of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and/or the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-NMFS).

### 1.3 Project Description

The South Carolina Department of Transportation proposes to replace two reinforced concrete box culverts where US Highway 278 crosses Beaverdam Branch. The double box culvert was damaged during a recent hurricane. The road is currently closed to traffic and SCDOT proposes to replace the culverts with a bridge along the existing alignment. The location of the project is shown in Appendix A.

### 1.4 Project Area and Setting

The Project Study Area (PSA) encompasses approximately 10 acres and includes mixed forested upland areas, recently clear cut areas, and a forested wetland system. Upland habitat types in the PSA are comprised of isolated tree species such as water oak (*Quercus nigra*), sweet gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), and loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*). The upland understory is dominated by saplings of the canopy species along with various vines such as muscadine (*Vitis rotundifolia*) and various species of green brier. (*Smilax* sp.). There is also a utility easement adjacent to the roadway, and a recently cleared property located adjacent to the PSA. An aerial image of the PSA is shown in Appendix A, Figure 2.



Aquatic resources in the PSA include Beaverdam Branch, a large braided wetland system comprised of swamp tupelo (*Nyssa aquatica*), and red maple (*Acer rubrum*). There is also a small pond located adjacent to SCDOT right of way on the north end of the PSA.

## 1.5 Consultation History

The USFWS South Carolina list of endangered and threatened species was reviewed, and an official species list was requested from the USFWS Information, Planning, and Conservation (IPaC) online database. A copy of the IPaC official species list is attached to this report. Additionally, any IPaC determination keys that were that are applicable to this project were completed. The IPaC letters are included in Appendix B

## 2. Federally Proposed and Listed Species and Designated Critical Habitat

A search of the USFWS database provided information regarding the potential occurrence of listed (proposed, threatened, or endangered) species within Jasper County. As of the date of this report, 15 species are listed as federally threatened or endangered and are under the jurisdiction of the USFWS. Seven species are listed as endangered and fall under the jurisdiction of NOAA-NMFS. Four species fall under the jurisdiction of both agencies.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) Natural Heritage Viewer species occurrence data was reviewed to determine the presence of any listed species or their habitat within the PSA. Areas that match the description of these protected species habitats within the PSA were reviewed accordingly. Descriptions of the species and the determinations of potential suitable habitat are included below. A field review was also done on October 21, 2024, to evaluate the PSA for any species or suitable habitat.

## 3. Effect Analysis

The proposed work includes the replacement of the damaged culverts with a new bridge. Some roadway improvements will be required to construct the new bridge. Specifically, the fill slopes on the existing road will have to be expanded to accommodate the new bridge. The slope improvements will require a minimal amount of fill to be placed in the adjacent wetlands. The impacts from the project will be limited to existing SCDOT right-of-way. The damaged culverts that are currently located in Beaverdam Branch will be removed. The project will also involve some tree clearing that will be necessary for construction access and to install sediment and erosion control BMP's.

### 3.1 Birds

Bald eagles are large raptors with a wingspan of about seven feet, are dark brown in color, and adults have pure white head and tail. Bald eagles are federally protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA). The birds generally nest within two miles of large bodies of water. Their diet is mostly fish but they will also eat other animals. There are no large bodies of water within two miles of the project area, and no bald eagles or their nests were observed in the PSA.

The red knot and piping plover are shorebirds that are primarily found in coastal marine and estuarine habitats with areas of exposed sediment such as tidal flats, sand spits, shoals, and sandbars. Eastern black rails are found in a variety of salt, brackish, or freshwater marsh with very dense vegetation. There is no habitat within the PSA for these coastal bird species. The project will have no effect on the eastern black rail, piping plover, or red knot.

The red-cockaded woodpecker is a species of woodpecker that nests in excavated cavities in longleaf or loblolly pine trees. The preferred habitat for the species includes mature longleaf pine stands with an open or low understory maintained by frequent fires. They often nest in family groups and clusters of nests are sometimes observed within their occupied territory. They forage mostly on mature pines where they flake away bark to look for insects. There is no suitable habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker within the PSA and no RCW's have been observed within the vicinity of the PSA. The project will have no effect on the red-cockaded woodpecker.

The American wood stork is a large wading bird that occupies a variety of wetland habitat types. Wood stork nesting colonies are typically found within cypress swamps, shallow creeks, or impoundments where there are trees surrounded by water. Preferred foraging habitat for wood storks consists of open water wetlands with a depth between 5 and 15 inches, and patches of submerged or emergent vegetation. There are no large open water areas suitable for nesting within the PSA, and no nearby nesting colonies were documented in the SCDNR Natural Heritage Species Reviewer.

The large wetland system in the PSA is suitable foraging habitat for the wood stork. Construction of the project is expected to result in some minor loss to suitable foraging habitat. Additionally, the increased disturbance from the construction activities would likely prevent wood storks from using the area during construction. This disturbance would be temporary and would return to normal conditions after construction is complete. The area of impact represents a very small percentage of available foraging habitat within and adjacent to the PSA. There is an abundance of similar habitat within the Beaverdam Branch swamp system that will provide undisturbed foraging habitat while the

project is being constructed. Due to the minor impacts and the availability of other suitable habitat in the vicinity of the PSA, the project may affect but will not adversely affect the American wood stork.

### 3.2 Plant Species

American chaffseed is a small, unbranched, perennial herb that grows in fire maintained longleaf pine flatwoods and savannas. There is no such habitat within the PSA and there are no known occurrences of chaffseed in the vicinity of the project. The project will have no effect on American chaffseed.

Canby's dropwort is perennial herb that grows 30 to 50 inches tall, has quill like leaves, and small white flowers that extend from the base of the leaves on compound structures. The plant is found in a variety of communities including cypress pine ponds, wet meadows, pineland savannas, and other open wet areas. There is no suitable habitat for Canby's dropwort in the PSA. The tree canopy in the wetlands is too dense to support the growth of this species. Also, a review of SCDNR Natural Heritage Viewer data shows no known occurrences of Canby's dropwort in the vicinity of the project. The project construction limits are expected to avoid all impacts to the emergent wetlands that are suitable habitat for Canby's dropwort. Since impacts to suitable habitat will be avoided, there are no nearby occurrences of the species, and there were no observations of the species during the field review, it has been determined that the project will have no effect on Canby's dropwort.

Pondberry is a deciduous shrub that grows to approximately 2 meters in height. It blooms during February and March with small yellow flowers. In South Carolina, pondberry is usually found in Carolina bays, swampy depressions, the margins of limestone sinks, and recently burned pinelands. These types of habitats are not found within the PSA. The SCDNR Natural Heritage viewer did not show any known occurrences of pondberry in the vicinity of the project. The project will have no effect on pondberry.

### 3.3 Fish

Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon are large anadromous fish species that spend most of the year in brackish or salt water, and then move into freshwater to spawn during the spring. Each of the sturgeon species occupy the lower portions or large rivers. Critical habitat has been designated for the Atlantic sturgeon and some waterbodies in South Carolina are listed as critical habitat by NOAA-NMFS. There are no large waterbodies or rivers located in the PSA, and Beaverdam Branch is not designated as critical habitat. For this reason, the project will have no effect on either sturgeon species or sturgeon critical habitat.

### 3.4 Reptiles

The reptiles listed as threatened or endangered in Jasper County include the loggerhead sea turtle, the green sea turtle, Kemp's Ridley sea turtle, and the leatherback sea turtle. These turtles are marine turtles that spend most of their time in ocean waters and migrate to beaches to spawn. The project is not located on the coast and there is no habitat for sea turtles in the PSA. The project will have no effect on any species of sea turtle.

### 3.5 Mammals

The project is located inland and there are no large rivers or marine waters in the PSA. There is no suitable habitat for marine mammals such as whales, or West Indian manatees. The project will have no effect on these species.

The PSA is within the year round active range of the Northern long-eared bat. The project was reviewed using the Northern Long-eared Bat Rangewide Determination Key in IPaC.(Project Code 2025-0006419). Based on information provided in the IPaC submission, a determination was made that the project may affect, but not likely to adversely affect the northern long-eared bat. A copy of the concurrence letter is included in Appendix B. The USFWS has 15 days to review the IPaC submission. If no comments are received, the determination of may affect, not likely to adversely affect is confirmed.

Tricolored bats forage, travel, and roost in wide variety of wooded habitats. They are also known to roost in manmade structures such as bridges and culverts. Most of the forested wetland areas in the PSA are suitable roosting habitat for the tricolored bat. Some tree removal in suitable habitat may be necessary to complete the project. SCDOT will limit tree clearing to the minimal amount necessary to safely complete the project.

Prior to Hurricane Debbie, there were two manmade structures in the project area that were historically utilized for roosting by several bat species including tricolored bats. The two concrete box culverts were inspected in 2022, and tricolored bats were observed roosting in one of the culverts. The two culverts were severely damaged during the hurricane. Water over topped the culverts during hurricane Debbie causing one of the culverts to collapse. The other culvert is passable but is also damaged structurally and there are now fallen trees near the entrance to the culvert. Portions of the culverts that could be accessed safely were inspected during the October 21<sup>st</sup> field visit. No bats were observed using the undamaged portions of the structures.

The tricolored bat is currently proposed for listing and does not have the full protection under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. A formal evaluation for the species will be completed at the time of final listing if the project has not been completed. If the listing status for tricolored bat goes into effect prior to completion of the proposed work, SCDOT will initiate consultation with the USFWS at that time. Based on the significant damage caused to the roosting structures during the hurricane and the minimal clearing impact associated with the project, it is anticipated that the project may affect but will not adversely affect the tricolored bat.

#### 4. Protected Species and Effect Determination

**Table 1. Protected Species and Effect Determination**

Species	Federal Protection Status	Effect Determination
Bald eagle ( <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> )	BGEPA	NE
Red-cockaded woodpecker ( <i>Picoides borealis</i> )	Endangered	NE
American wood stork ( <i>Mycteria Americana</i> )	Threatened	MANLAA
Eastern black rail ( <i>Laterallus jamaicensis</i> )	Threatened	NE
Red knot ( <i>Calidrius canutus rufa</i> )	Threatened	NE
Piping plover ( <i>Charadrius melodus</i> )	Threatened	NE
Shortnose sturgeon ( <i>Acipenser brevirostrum</i> )**	Endangered	NE
Atlantic sturgeon ( <i>Acipenser oxyrinchus</i> **	Endangered	NE
West Indian manatee ( <i>Trichechus manatus</i> )	Threatened	NE
Green sea turtle ( <i>Chelonia mydas</i> )***	Threatened	NE
Kemp's ridley sea turtle ( <i>Lepidochelys kempi</i> )***	Endangered	NE
Leatherback sea turtle ( <i>Dermochelys coriacea</i> )***	Endangered	NE
Loggerhead sea turtle ( <i>Caretta caretts</i> )***	Threatened	NE
Right whale ( <i>Balaena glacialis</i> **	Endangered	NE
Sei whale ( <i>Balanea glacialis</i> **	Endangered	NE
Sperm whale ( <i>Physeter microcephalus</i> **	Endangered	NE
Finback whale ( <i>Balaenoptera physalus</i> )**	Endangered	NE
Humpback whale ( <i>Megaptera novaengliae</i> **	Endangered	NE
Northern Long-eared bat ( <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> )	Endangered	MANLAA
Tri-colored bat ( <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> )*	At-Risk*	-
American chaffseed ( <i>Schwalbea Americana</i> )	Endangered	NE
Canby's dropwort ( <i>Oxpolis canbyi</i> )	Endangered	NE
Pondberry ( <i>Lindera melissifolia</i> )	Endangered	NE

\*Tricolored bat was proposed as endangered in September 2022. The effect determination will be updated when the listing becomes final.

\*\*These species fall under the jurisdiction of NOAA-NMFS.

\*\*\*These species fall under the jurisdiction of NOAA-NMFS and the USFWS.

Key: No Effect (NE), May Affect Not Likely to Adversely Affect (MANLAA), May Affect Likely to Adversely Affect (MALAA)

The above effect determinations were decided based upon the findings of the Biological Assessment.

## 5. Conclusion



A review of federally listed species data and habitat evaluation in the field results in determinations that the project may affect but will not adversely affect the Northern long-eared bat and the wood stork. An official determination for the tricolored bat will be made upon final listing if the project has not been completed at that time. Based on lack of suitable habitat in the PSA, the project will have no effect on any other threatened or endangered species or critical habitats currently listed by the USFWS or the NOAA-NMFS.

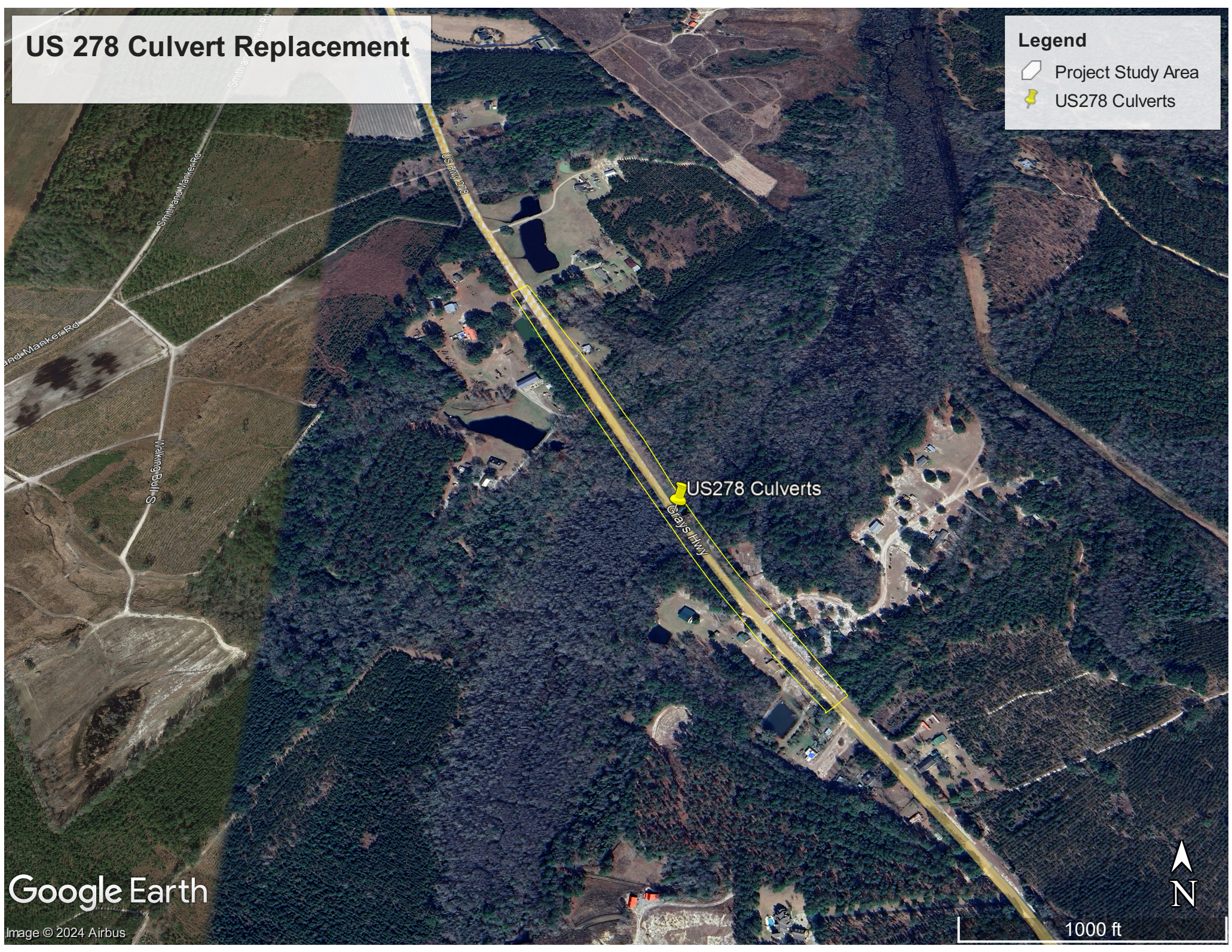
## Appendix A – Figures



# US 278 Culvert Replacement

**Legend**

-  Project Study Area
-  US278 Culverts





**Appendix B – USFWS IPaC Coordination Letters and Species List**



# United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
South Carolina Ecological Services  
176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200  
Charleston, SC 29407-7558  
Phone: (843) 727-4707 Fax: (843) 727-4218

In Reply Refer To:

10/16/2024 16:25:33 UTC

Project Code: 2025-0006419

Project Name: US 278 Culvert Replacement Project

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2) (c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological

evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

<https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/endangered-species-consultation-handbook.pdf>

**Migratory Birds:** In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity, intentional or unintentional, resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts, see <https://www.fws.gov/program/migratory-bird-permit/what-we-do>.

The MBTA has no provision for allowing take of migratory birds that may be unintentionally killed or injured by otherwise lawful activities. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures, see <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/threats-birds>.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit <https://www.fws.gov/partner/council-conservation-migratory-birds>.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Code in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List
- USFWS National Wildlife Refuges and Fish Hatcheries
- Bald & Golden Eagles
- Migratory Birds
- Wetlands

## **OFFICIAL SPECIES LIST**

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

**South Carolina Ecological Services**  
176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200  
Charleston, SC 29407-7558  
(843) 727-4707

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Code: 2025-0006419

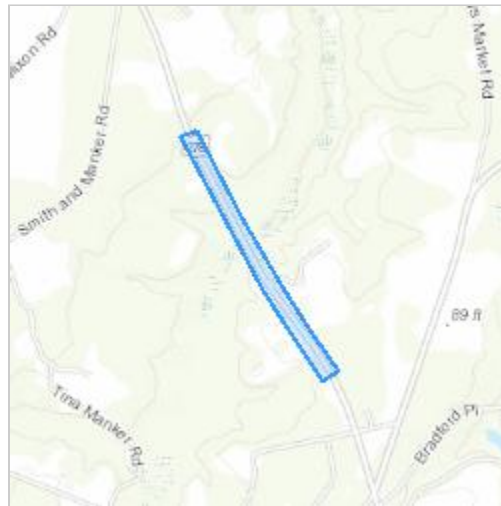
Project Name: US 278 Culvert Replacement Project

Project Type: Road/Hwy - Maintenance/Modification

Project Description: SCDOT proposes to replace two culverts on US 278 south of the Town of Grays, South Carolina. The two culverts at Beaverdam Creek were damaged during a recent storm event and will be replaced with a bridge.

Project Location:

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@32.65635805,-81.01084002770679,14z>



Counties: Jasper County, South Carolina

## ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SPECIES

There is a total of 12 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries<sup>1</sup>, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

- 
1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

**MAMMALS**

NAME	STATUS
Northern Long-eared Bat <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045</a>	Endangered
Tricolored Bat <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10515</a>	Proposed Endangered

**BIRDS**

NAME	STATUS
Eastern Black Rail <i>Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. jamaicensis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10477">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10477</a>	Threatened
Piping Plover <i>Charadrius melodus</i> Population: [Atlantic Coast and Northern Great Plains populations] - Wherever found, except those areas where listed as endangered. There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6039">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6039</a>	Threatened
Red-cockaded Woodpecker <i>Picoides borealis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7614">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7614</a>	Endangered

**REPTILES**

NAME	STATUS
Green Sea Turtle <i>Chelonia mydas</i> Population: North Atlantic DPS There is <b>proposed</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6199">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6199</a>	Threatened
Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle <i>Lepidochelys kempii</i> There is <b>proposed</b> critical habitat for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5523">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5523</a>	Endangered
Leatherback Sea Turtle <i>Dermochelys coriacea</i> There is <b>final</b> critical habitat for this species. Your location does not overlap the critical habitat. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1493">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1493</a>	Endangered

**INSECTS**

NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly <i>Danaus plexippus</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species.	Candidate

NAME	STATUS
Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743</a>	

## FLOWERING PLANTS

NAME	STATUS
American Chaffseed <i>Schwalbea americana</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1286">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1286</a>	Endangered
Canby's Dropwort <i>Oxypolis canbyi</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7738">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/7738</a>	Endangered
Pondberry <i>Lindera melissifolia</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1279">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1279</a>	Endangered

## CRITICAL HABITATS

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

YOU ARE STILL REQUIRED TO DETERMINE IF YOUR PROJECT(S) MAY HAVE EFFECTS ON ALL ABOVE LISTED SPECIES.

## USFWS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE LANDS AND FISH HATCHERIES

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the [National Wildlife Refuge](#) system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS OR FISH HATCHERIES WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA.

## BALD & GOLDEN EAGLES

Bald and golden eagles are protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act<sup>1</sup> and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act<sup>2</sup>.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to bald or golden eagles, or their habitats<sup>3</sup>, should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the ["Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles"](#).

- 
1. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
  2. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.



### 3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

THERE ARE NO BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLES WITHIN THE VICINITY OF YOUR PROJECT AREA.

## MIGRATORY BIRDS

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act<sup>1</sup> and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act<sup>2</sup>.

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats<sup>3</sup> should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described in the links below. Specifically, please review the "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)".

- 
1. The [Migratory Birds Treaty Act](#) of 1918.
  2. The [Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act](#) of 1940.
  3. 50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, see the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY below to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

NAME	BREEDING SEASON
Prairie Warbler <i>Setophaga discolor</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9513</a>	Breeds May 1 to Jul 31
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9398</a>	Breeds May 10 to Sep 10
Swallow-tailed Kite <i>Elanoides forficatus</i> This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8938">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8938</a>	Breeds Mar 10 to Jun 30

## PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read "[Supplemental Information on Migratory Birds and Eagles](#)", specifically the FAQ section titled "Proper

Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

### Probability of Presence (■)

Green bars; the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during that week of the year.

### Breeding Season (■)

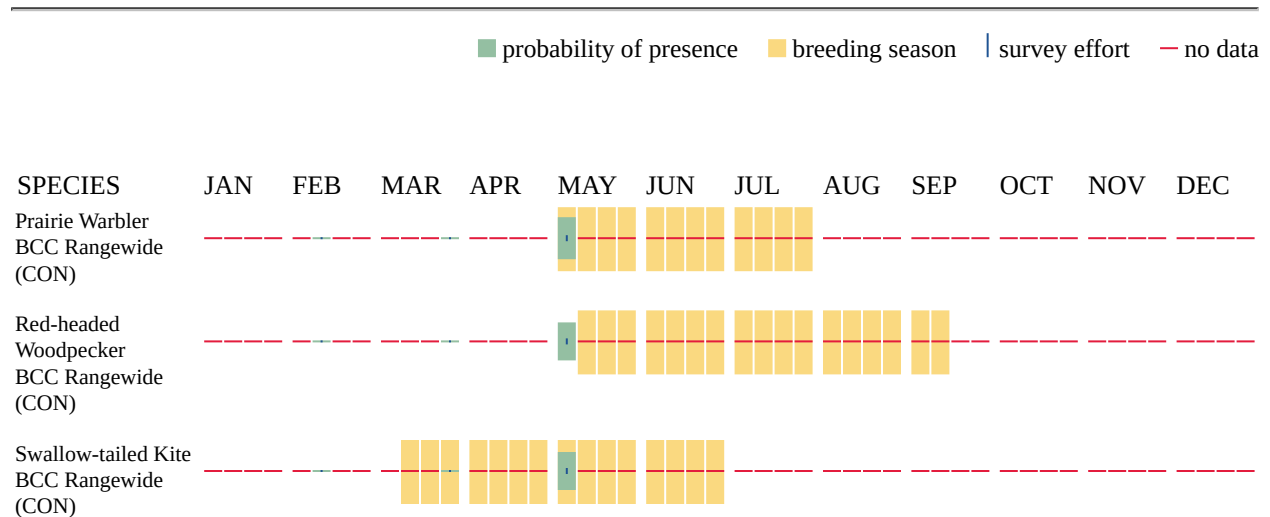
Yellow bars; liberal estimate of the timeframe inside which the bird breeds across its entire range.

### Survey Effort (|)

Vertical black lines; the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps.

### No Data (—)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.



Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Eagle Management <https://www.fws.gov/program/eagle-management>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/avoiding-and-minimizing-incident-take-migratory-birds>
- Nationwide conservation measures for birds <https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/nationwide-standard-conservation-measures.pdf>
- Supplemental Information for Migratory Birds and Eagles in IPaC <https://www.fws.gov/media/supplemental-information-migratory-birds-and-bald-and-golden-eagles-may-occur-project-action>

# WETLANDS

Impacts to [NWI wetlands](#) and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District](#).

Please note that the NWI data being shown may be out of date. We are currently working to update our NWI data set. We recommend you verify these results with a site visit to determine the actual extent of wetlands on site.

## FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

- PFO1/4B
- PFO1C
- PFO1F
- PFO1/3B
- PFO1A
- PFO1B

## RIVERINE

- R2UBH
- R4SBC

## FRESHWATER POND

- PUBHx

## **IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION**

Agency: South Carolina Department of Transportation

Name: Chris Beckham

Address: 955 Park Street

City: Columbia

State: SC

Zip: 29201

Email: beckhamjc@scdot.org

Phone: 8036099464

## **LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Lead Agency: Federal Highway Administration



# United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
South Carolina Ecological Services  
176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200  
Charleston, SC 29407-7558  
Phone: (843) 727-4707 Fax: (843) 727-4218

In Reply Refer To:  
Project code: 2025-0006419  
Project Name: US 278 Culvert Replacement Project

10/28/2024 12:06:06 UTC

Federal Nexus: yes  
Federal Action Agency (if applicable): Federal Highway Administration

**Subject:** Federal agency coordination under the Endangered Species Act, Section 7 for 'US 278 Culvert Replacement Project'

Dear Chris Beckham:

This letter records your determination using the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) system provided to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) on October 28, 2024, for 'US 278 Culvert Replacement Project' (here forward, Project). This project has been assigned Project Code 2025-0006419 and all future correspondence should clearly reference this number. **Please carefully review this letter. Your Endangered Species Act (Act) requirements may not be complete.**

## **Ensuring Accurate Determinations When Using IPaC**

The Service developed the IPaC system and associated species' determination keys in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA; 87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.) and based on a standing analysis. All information submitted by the Project proponent into IPaC must accurately represent the full scope and details of the Project.

Failure to accurately represent or implement the Project as detailed in IPaC or the Northern Long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat Range-wide Determination Key (DKey), invalidates this letter. ***Answers to certain questions in the DKey commit the project proponent to implementation of conservation measures that must be followed for the ESA determination to remain valid. Note that conservation measures for northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat may differ. If both bat species are present in the action area and the key suggests more conservative measures for one of the species for your Project, the Project may need to apply the most conservative measures in order to avoid adverse effects. If unsure which conservation measures should be applied, please contact the appropriate Ecological Services Field Office.***

**Determination for the Northern Long-Eared Bat and Tricolored Bat**

Based on your IPaC submission and a standing analysis completed by the Service, you determined the proposed Project will have the following effect determinations:

<b>Species</b>	<b>Listing Status</b>	<b>Determination</b>
Northern Long-eared Bat ( <i>Myotis septentrionalis</i> )	Endangered	NLAA
Tricolored Bat ( <i>Perimyotis subflavus</i> )	Proposed Endangered	NLAA

Federal agencies must consult with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) when an action *may affect* a listed species. Tricolored bat is proposed for listing as endangered under the ESA, but not yet listed. For actions that may affect a proposed species, agencies cannot consult, but they can *confer* under the authority of section 7(a)(4) of the ESA. Such conferences can follow the procedures for a consultation and be adopted as such if and when the proposed species is listed. Should the tricolored bat be listed, agencies must review projects that are not yet complete, or projects with ongoing effects within the tricolored bat range that previously received a NE or NLAA determination from the key to confirm that the determination is still accurate.

Unless the Service advises you within 15 days of the date of this letter that your IPaC-assisted determination was incorrect, this letter verifies that consultation on the Action is complete for northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat and no further action is necessary unless either of the following occurs:

- new information reveals effects of the action that may affect the northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat in a manner or to an extent not previously considered; or,
- the identified action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to the northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat that was not considered when completing the determination key.

### **15-Day Review Period**

As indicated above, the Service will notify you within 15 calendar days if we determine that this proposed Action does not meet the criteria for a “may affect, not likely to adversely affect” (NLAA) determination for the northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat. If we do not notify you within that timeframe, you may proceed with the Action under the terms of the NLAA concurrence provided here. This verification period allows the identified Ecological Services Field Office to apply local knowledge to evaluation of the Action, as we may identify a small subset of actions having impacts that we did not anticipate when developing the key. In such cases, the identified Ecological Services Field Office may request additional information to verify the effects determination reached through the Northern Long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat DKey.

### **Other Species and Critical Habitat that May be Present in the Action Area**

The IPaC-assisted determination key for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat does not apply to the following ESA-protected species and/or critical habitat that also may occur in your Action area:

- American Chaffseed *Schwalbea americana* Endangered
- Canby's Dropwort *Oxypolis canbyi* Endangered
- Eastern Black Rail *Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. jamaicensis* Threatened
- Green Sea Turtle *Chelonia mydas* Threatened
- Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle *Lepidochelys kempii* Endangered
- Leatherback Sea Turtle *Dermochelys coriacea* Endangered
- Monarch Butterfly *Danaus plexippus* Candidate
- Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* Threatened
- Pondberry *Lindera melissifolia* Endangered
- Red-cockaded Woodpecker *Picoides borealis* Endangered

You may coordinate with our Office to determine whether the Action may affect the species and/or critical habitat listed above. Note that reinitiation of consultation would be necessary if a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the identified action before it is complete.

If you have any questions regarding this letter or need further assistance, please contact the South Carolina Ecological Services and reference Project Code 2025-0006419 associated with this Project.

## Action Description

You provided to IPaC the following name and description for the subject Action.

### 1. Name

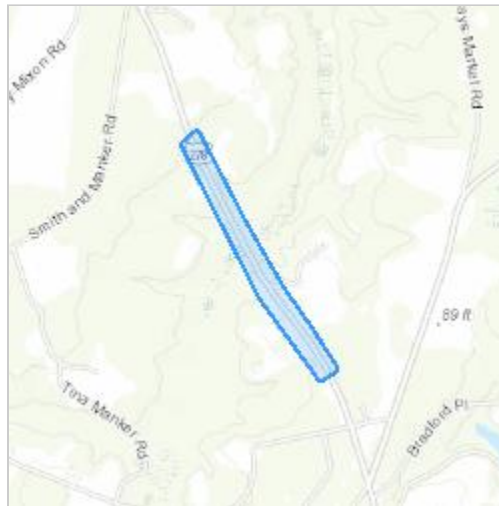
US 278 Culvert Replacement Project

### 2. Description

The following description was provided for the project 'US 278 Culvert Replacement Project':

SCDOT proposes to replace two culverts on US 278 south of the Town of Grays, South Carolina. The two culverts at Beaverdam Creek were damaged during a recent storm event and will be replaced with a bridge.

The approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <https://www.google.com/maps/@32.656484750000004,-81.01100953619468,14z>





## DETERMINATION KEY RESULT

Based on the answers provided, the proposed Action is consistent with a determination of “may affect, but not likely to adversely affect” for a least one species covered by this determination key.

## QUALIFICATION INTERVIEW

1. Does the proposed project include, or is it reasonably certain to cause, intentional take of listed bats or any other listed species?

**Note:** Intentional take is defined as take that is the intended result of a project. Intentional take could refer to research, direct species management, surveys, and/or studies that include intentional handling/encountering, harassment, collection, or capturing of any individual of a federally listed threatened, endangered or proposed species?

*No*

2. Is the action area wholly within Zone 2 of the year-round active area for northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat?

**Automatically answered**

*No*

3. Does the action area intersect Zone 1 of the year-round active area for northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat?

**Automatically answered**

*Yes*

4. Your project overlaps with an area where northern long-eared bats or tricolored bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Do you understand that your project may impact bats roosting in trees at any time during the year?

*Yes*

5. Does any component of the action involve leasing, construction or operation of wind turbines? Answer 'yes' if the activities considered are conducted with the intention of gathering survey information to inform the leasing, construction, or operation of wind turbines.

**Note:** For federal actions, answer ‘yes’ if the construction or operation of wind power facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for a federal agency action (federal permit, funding, etc.).

*No*

6. Is the proposed action authorized, permitted, licensed, funded, or being carried out by a Federal agency in whole or in part?

*Yes*

7. Is the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding or authorizing the proposed action, in whole or in part?

*Yes*

8. FHWA, FRA, and FTA have completed a range-wide programmatic consultation for transportation- related actions within the range of the Indiana bat, northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat.

Does your proposed action fall within the scope of this programmatic consultation?

**Note:** If you are unsure, but your action is transportation related, please select "Yes" and use the FHWA, FRA, FTA Assisted Determination Key (FHWA DKey) in IPaC to determine if the programmatic consultation is applicable to your action. Return to this key and answer 'no' to this question if it is not.

*No*

9. Are you an employee of the federal action agency or have you been officially designated in writing by the agency as its designated non-federal representative for the purposes of Endangered Species Act Section 7 informal consultation per 50 CFR § 402.08?

**Note:** This key may be used for federal actions and for non-federal actions to facilitate section 7 consultation and to help determine whether an incidental take permit may be needed, respectively. This question is for information purposes only.

*Yes*

10. Is the lead federal action agency the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Federal Communications Commission (FCC)? Is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Federal Communications Commission (FCC) funding or authorizing the proposed action, in whole or in part?

*No*

11. Is the lead federal action agency the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)?

*No*

12. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 0.5 miles of a known bat hibernaculum?

**Note:** The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your State wildlife agency.

**Automatically answered**

*No*

13. Does the action area contain any winter roosts or caves (or associated sinkholes, fissures, or other karst features), mines, rocky outcroppings, or tunnels that could provide habitat for hibernating bats?

*No*

14. Does the action area contain (1) talus or (2) anthropogenic or naturally formed rock shelters or crevices in rocky outcrops, rock faces or cliffs?

*No*

15. Will the action cause effects to a bridge?

**Note:** Covered bridges should be considered as bridges in this question.

*No*

16. Will the action result in effects to a culvert or tunnel at any time of year?

*Yes*

17. Does the culvert or tunnel equal or exceed 23 feet (7.0 meters) in length?

*No*

18. Are trees present within 1000 feet of the action area?

**Note:** If there are trees within the action area that are of a sufficient size to be potential roosts for bats answer "Yes". If unsure, additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

*Yes*

19. Does the action include the intentional exclusion of bats from a building or structure?

**Note:** Exclusion is conducted to deny bats' entry or reentry into a building. To be effective and to avoid harming bats, it should be done according to established standards. If your action includes bat exclusion and you are unsure whether northern long-eared bats or tricolored bats are present, answer "Yes." Answer "No" if there are no signs of bat use in the building/structure. If unsure, contact your local Ecological Services Field Office to help assess whether northern long-eared bats or tricolored bats may be present. Contact a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO) for help in how to exclude bats from a structure safely without causing harm to the bats (to find a NWCO certified in bat standards, search the Internet using the search term "National Wildlife Control Operators Association bats"). Also see the White-Nose Syndrome Response Team's guide for bat control in structures.

*No*

20. Does the action involve removal, modification, or maintenance of a human-made structure (barn, house, or other building) **known or suspected to contain roosting bats**?

*No*

21. Will the action cause construction of one or more new roads open to the public?

For federal actions, answer 'yes' when the construction or operation of these facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for an action taken by a federal agency (federal permit, funding, etc.).

*No*

22. Will the action include or cause any construction or other activity that is reasonably certain to increase average daily traffic permanently or temporarily on one or more existing roads?

**Note:** For federal actions, answer 'yes' when the construction or operation of these facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for an action taken by a federal agency (federal permit, funding, etc.). .

*No*

23. Will the action include or cause any construction or other activity that is reasonably certain to increase the number of travel lanes on an existing thoroughfare?

For federal actions, answer 'yes' when the construction or operation of these facilities is either (1) part of the federal action or (2) would not occur but for an action taken by a federal agency (federal permit, funding, etc.).

*No*

24. Will the proposed Action involve the creation of a new water-borne contaminant source (e.g., leachate pond, pits containing chemicals that are not NSF/ANSI 60 compliant)?

**Note:** For information regarding NSF/ANSI 60 please visit <https://www.nsf.org/knowledge-library/nsf-ansi-standard-60-drinking-water-treatment-chemicals-health-effects>

*No*

25. Will the proposed action involve the creation of a new point source discharge from a facility other than a water treatment plant or storm water system?

*No*

26. Will the action include drilling or blasting?

*Yes*

27. Your project overlaps with an area where northern long-eared and tricolored bats may be present year-round.

Will the drilling or blasting produce noise or vibrations above existing background levels that will affect suitable habitat within the active year-round portion for NLEB and/or TCB?

**Note:** Additional information defining suitable suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and/or tricolored bat, can be found in Appendix A in the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared Bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>

*Yes*

28. Will the action involve military training (e.g., smoke operations, obscurant operations, exploding munitions, artillery fire, range use, helicopter or fixed wing aircraft use)?

*No*

29. Will the proposed action involve the use of herbicides or other pesticides other than herbicides (e.g., fungicides, insecticides, or rodenticides)?

*No*

30. Will the action include or cause activities that are reasonably certain to cause chronic or intense nighttime noise (above current levels of ambient noise in the area) in suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat during the active season?

Chronic noise is noise that is continuous or occurs repeatedly again and again for a long time. Sources of chronic or intense noise that could cause adverse effects to bats may include, but are not limited to: road traffic; trains; aircraft; industrial activities; gas compressor stations; loud music; crowds; oil and gas extraction; construction; and mining.

**Note:** Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

*No*

31. Does the action include, or is it reasonably certain to cause, the use of permanent or temporary artificial lighting within 1000 feet of suitable northern long-eared bat or tricolored bat roosting habitat?

**Note:** Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

*Yes*

32. Will the action cause an increase in the extent of suitable forested habitat exposed to artificial lighting?

*No*

33. Will the action include tree cutting or other means of knocking down or bringing down trees, tree topping, or tree trimming?

*Yes*

34. Will the proposed action occur exclusively in an already established and currently maintained utility right-of-way?

*Yes*

35. Will the proposed action result in the cutting of entire trees outside of the currently maintained utility right-of-way?

*No*

36. Will tree trimming, limbing, or cutting be used to expand the footprint of any currently maintained utility rights-of-way?

*No*

37. Will tree trimming, limbing, or cutting in currently maintained utility rights-of-way occur during winter torpor?

**Note:** Bat activity periods for your state can be found in Appendix L of the Service's Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared Bat Survey [Guidelines](#).

*No*

38. Will tree trimming, limbing, or cutting in currently maintained utility rights-of-way occur during the pup season?

**Note:** Bat activity periods for your state can be found in Appendix L of the Service's Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared Bat Survey [Guidelines](#).

*No*

39. Will the proposed action result in the use of prescribed fire?

**Note:** If the prescribed fire action includes other activities than application of fire (e.g., tree cutting, fire line preparation) please consider impacts from those activities within the previous representative questions in the key. This set of questions only considers impacts from flame and smoke.

*No*

40. Does the action area intersect the northern long-eared bat species list area?

**Automatically answered**

*Yes*

41. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 0.25 miles of a culvert that is known to be occupied by northern long-eared or tricolored bats?

**Automatically answered**

*No*

42. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 150 feet of a documented northern long-eared bat roost site?

**Note:** The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your State wildlife agency.

**Automatically answered**

*No*

43. Your project overlaps with an area where northern long-eared bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Is suitable northern long-eared bat habitat present within 1000 feet of project activities?

*Yes*

44. Your project overlaps with an area where northern long-eared bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Has a presence/absence survey for the northern long-eared bat following the Service's [Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat Survey Guidelines](#) been conducted within the project area? If unsure, answer "No."

No

45. Your project overlaps with an area where northern long-eared bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Will drilling or blasting occur during the Winter Torpor and/or Summer Occupancy periods?

No

46. Are any of the trees proposed for cutting or other means of knocking down, bringing down, topping, or trimming suitable for northern long-eared bat roosting (i.e., live trees and/or snags  $\geq 3$  inches dbh that have exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, and/or cavities)?

**Note:** Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

Yes

47. Your project overlaps with an area where northern long-eared bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Will tree cutting/trimming or other knocking or bringing down of trees occur during the Winter Torpor and/or Summer Occupancy periods?

No

48. Does the action area intersect the tricolored bat species list area?

**Automatically answered**

Yes

49. [Semantic] Is the action area located within 0.25 miles of a culvert that is known to be occupied by northern long-eared or tricolored bats?

**Note:** The map queried for this question contains proprietary information and cannot be displayed. If you need additional information, please contact your State wildlife agency.

**Automatically answered**

No



50. Your project overlaps with an area where tricolored bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Has a presence/probable absence survey for the tricolored bat following the Service's [Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat Survey Guidelines](#) been conducted within the project area? If unsure, answer "No."

No

51. Your project overlaps with an area where tricolored bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Is suitable tricolored bat habitat present within 1000 feet of project activities? Note: If there are trees within the action area that may provide potential roosts for tricolored bats (e.g., clusters of leaves in live and dead deciduous trees, Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*), clusters of dead pine needles of large live pines) answer "Yes." Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

Yes

52. Your project overlaps with an area where tricolored bats may be present and roosting in trees year-round.

Will drilling or blasting occur during the Winter Torpor and/or Summer Occupancy periods?

No

53. Do any of the trees proposed for cutting or other means of knocking down, bringing down, topping, or trimming provide potential roosts for tricolored bats (e.g., clusters of leaves in live and dead deciduous trees, Spanish moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*), clusters of dead pine needles of large live pine trees)?

**Note:** Additional information defining suitable summer habitat for the northern long-eared bat and tricolored bat can be found in Appendix A of the USFWS' Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern long-eared bat Survey Guidelines at: <https://www.fws.gov/media/range-wide-indiana-bat-and-northern-long-eared-bat-survey-guidelines>.

Yes

54. Will tree cutting/trimming or other knocking or bringing down of trees occur during Winter Torpor and/or the Pup Season?

**Note:** Bat activity periods for your state can be found in Appendix L of the [Range-wide Indiana Bat and Northern Long-Eared Bat Survey Guidelines](#)

No

55. Do you have any documents that you want to include with this submission?

*No*

## PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE

Enter the extent of the action area (in acres) from which trees will be removed - round up to the nearest tenth of an acre. For this question, include the entire area where tree removal will take place, even if some live or dead trees will be left standing.

6.0

## **IPAC USER CONTACT INFORMATION**

Agency: South Carolina Department of Transportation

Name: Chris Beckham

Address: 955 Park Street

City: Columbia

State: SC

Zip: 29201

Email: beckhamjc@scdot.org

Phone: 8036099464

## **LEAD AGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Lead Agency: Federal Highway Administration

**From:** [Olds, Melanie J](#)  
**To:** [Beckham, Chris](#)  
**Cc:** [Belcher, Jeffery - FHWA](#); [JohnsonHughes, Christy](#); [Charleston Regulatory, FW4](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] US 278 Culvert Replacement  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 29, 2024 10:02:37 AM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-izvbnclf.png](#)  
[Outlook-wcisinxk.png](#)

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**\*\*\* This is an EXTERNAL email. Please do not click on a link or open any attachments unless you are confident it is from a trusted source. \*\*\***

FWS Project Code: 2025-0006419

Chris,

Yes, for the NLEB December 15 - February 15 (winter torpor) and April 1 - July 15 (summer occupancy) are the appropriate seasonal dates.

Additionally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has reviewed the US 278 Culvert Replacement Project, in Jasper County, South Carolina. You have requested that the Service provide concurrence or comments regarding potential impacts to federally listed species in accordance with requirements set forth under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq. (ESA).

Your agency has made a determination of *may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect* for Wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) and Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*).

Based on the justification provided, the Service concurs with your determination.

Consultation is not necessary for no effect determinations. Please note that obligations under section 7 of the ESA should be reconsidered if: (1) new information reveals impacts of this identified action that may affect listed species or critical habitat in a manner not previously considered; (2) this action is subsequently modified in a manner, which was not considered in this assessment; or (3) a new species is listed or critical habitat is determined that may be affected by the identified action.

The Service recommends that you contact the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources regarding potential impacts to State protected species. This email will serve as our official response. Please let me know if you have any questions.

*Melanie*

---

**Melanie Olds**

*Fish & Wildlife Biologist*

*Regulatory Team Lead/FERC Coordinator*

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
South Carolina Ecological Services Field Office  
176 Croghan Spur Road, Suite 200  
Charleston, SC 29407  
Phone: (843) 534-0403



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**From:** Beckham, Chris <BeckhamJC@scdot.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 28, 2024 8:12 AM  
**To:** Olds, Melanie J <melanie\_old@fws.gov>  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL] US 278 Culvert Replacement

Good morning Melanie,

I entered the project info into the new D key. I got a determination of NLAA after adding the seasonal dates restricting clearing and drilling/blasting outside of torpor and pup season. Right now, we have the dates as Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> – Feb 15<sup>th</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> – July 15<sup>th</sup>. Can you confirm that those are the correct dates for this areas of the state? Also let me know if you have any other questions or concerns after you look at the submission in IPaC.

Thanks,  
Chris

---

**From:** Charleston Regulatory, FW4 <charleston\_regulatory@fws.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 24, 2024 3:12 PM  
**To:** Beckham, Chris <BeckhamJC@scdot.org>  
**Cc:** Olds, Melanie J <melanie\_old@fws.gov>; Belcher, Jeffery - FHWA <Jeffrey.Belcher@dot.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] US 278 Culvert Replacement

**\*\*\* This is an EXTERNAL email. Please do not click on a link or open any attachments unless you are confident it is from a trusted source. \*\*\***

Chris,

Yesterday the Service released our combined NLEB/TCB determination key in IPaC. I would recommend going back into the IPaC project and running the new determination key. The outcome may change for NLEB and I know that it asks more culvert questions. Let me know when you've completed that and we can go from there.

Melanie

---

**From:** Beckham, Chris <[BeckhamJC@scdot.org](mailto:BeckhamJC@scdot.org)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 23, 2024 9:01 AM

**To:** Charleston Regulatory, FW4 <[charleston\\_regulatory@fws.gov](mailto:charleston_regulatory@fws.gov)>

**Cc:** Olds, Melanie J <[melanie\\_old@fws.gov](mailto:melanie_old@fws.gov)>; Belcher, Jeffery - FHWA <[Jeffrey.Belcher@dot.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.Belcher@dot.gov)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] US 278 Culvert Replacement

**This email has been received from outside of DOI - Use caution before clicking on links, opening attachments, or responding.**

Good morning,

The South Carolina Department of Transportation, on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration, is requesting consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service for species pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. SCDOT proposes to replace two culverts on US 278 in Jasper County that were damaged during Hurricane Debbie. The road is currently closed to traffic due to the damage from the storm. Please find a copy of the attached biological assessment report for the project. A copy of the IPaC species list and the determination key submission for the Northern long-eared bat is included in the report. For reference, the IPaC project code is 2025-0006419.

Chris Beckham

SCDOT

Environmental Services Office

Office: (803) 737-1332

Mobile: (803) 609-9464



# PERMIT DETERMINATION

Date: 10/21/2024

Project ID: P043789

From: Caycee Cleaver

Company: SCDOT

Contact Info (phone and/or email): cleavercc@scdot.org

Permit Manager: Will McGoldrick - Alternative Delivery Coordinator

Project Name: US 278 Grays Highway Emergency Repairs (TS Debby)

County: Jasper

(Optional) Structure #: \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDY AREA:

Does there appear to be WOTUS in the study area?  YES  NO

## PERMIT TYPE:

It has been determined that no permit is required because:

The following permit(s) is/are necessary:

(Please check which type(s) of permit the project will need)

USACE Permit	GP <input type="checkbox"/>	IP <input type="checkbox"/>	NWP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
OCRM Permit	Individual CAP <input type="checkbox"/>	CAP GP <input type="checkbox"/>	
Navigable Permit	State NAV <input type="checkbox"/>	USCG <input type="checkbox"/>	

## 408 PROJECT INFO:

Is it within a 408 Project:  YES  NO

408 Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## MITIGATION:

Mitigation Bank:  YES  NO

Mitigation Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: Emergency replacement

The determination above was based on the most recently available information at the time. This is a preliminary determination and is subject to change if the design of the project is modified.

Caycee Cleaver  
Digitally signed by Caycee Cleaver  
Date: 2024.10.21 13:21:12 -04'00'  
Biologist, SCDOT/Consultant

Oct 21, 2024

Date



# Watershed and Water Quality Information

SC Department of Environmental Services

General Information

**Applicant Name:** Caycee Cleaver

**Permit Type:** Construction

**Address:** 13805 GRAYS HWY,  
RIDGELAND, SC, 29936

**Latitude/Longitude:** 32.656531 / -81.011368

**MS4 Designation:** Not in designated area

**Monitoring Station:** CSTL-122

**Within Coastal Critical Area:** No

**Water Classification (Provisional):** FW

**Waterbody Name:** BEAVERDAM BRANCH

**Entered Waterbody Name:**

Parameter Description

NH3N	Ammonia	CD	Cadmium	CR	Chromium
CU	Copper	HG	Mercury	NI	Nickel
PB	Lead	ZN	Zinc	DO	Dissolved Oxygen
PH	pH	TURBIDITY	Turbidity	ECOLI	Escherichia coli (Freshwaters)
FC	Fecal Coliform (Shellfish)	BIO	Macroinvertebrates (Bio)	TP	(Lakes) Phosphorus
TN	(Lakes) Nitrogen	CHLA	(Lakes) Chlorophyll a	ENTERO	Enterococcus (Coastal Waters)
HGF	Mercury (Fish Tissue)	PCB	PCB (Fish)		

Impaired Status (downstream sites)

Station	NH3N	CD	CR	CU	HG	NI	PB	ZN	DO	PH	TURBIDITY	ECOLI	FC	BIO	TP	TN	CHLA	ENTERO	HGF	PCB	
CSTL-122	X	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	N	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

F = Standards full supported    A = Assessed at upstream station    WnTN = Within TMDL, parameter not supported    WnTF = Within TMDL, parameter full supported  
 N = Standards not supported    X = Parameter not assessed at station    InTN = In TMDL, parameter not supported    InTF = In TMDL, parameter full supported

Parameters to be addressed (those not supporting standards)

**ECOLI** - Escherichia coli (Freshwaters)

Fish Consumption Advisory

Waters of Concern (WOC)

TMDL Information - TMDL Parameters to be addressed

**In TMDL Watershed:** No  
**TMDL Report No:**  
**TMDL Document Link:**

**TMDL Site:**  
**TMDL Parameter:**

Report Date: October 15, 2024



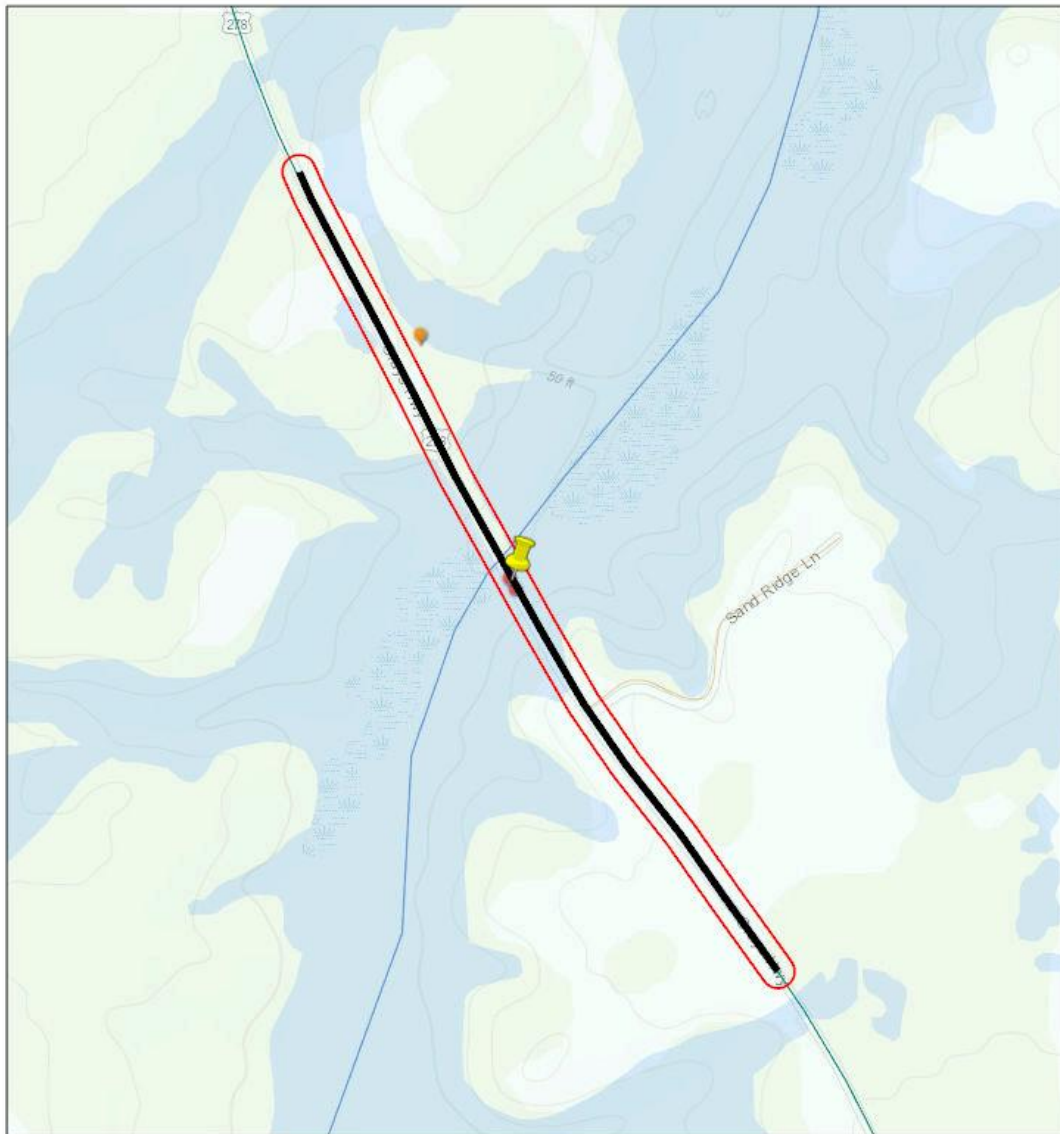
# US 278 (Grays Hwy) Culvert Emergency Repair Jasper County

## Area of Interest (AOI) Information

Area : 14.78 acres

Buffer: 75 Feet

Oct 16 2024 10:17:33 Eastern Daylight Time



- s\_yfw-pushpin
- Override 1
- Override 1
- Roads and Bridges - State Highways
- Boundaries - Counties
- Water - Wetland Likelihood Layer
- Water - National Hydrography Data
- Cultural Layers - Historic Structures
- Roads and Bridges - Statewide Bridges
- Roads and Bridges - Other Roads

1:9,028

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 mi

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 km

Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBasis, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

## Environmental Questions for Feasibility Study:

What is the anticipated NEPA Document Type?

Is noise analysis required?

What is the anticipated Permit Type(s)?

Are there navigable waters in the project area?

Is the project within an existing Mitigation Bank Service area?

Has a SCDHEC Water Quality Report been provided?

## Additional Comments:

## Summary

Name	Count	Area(acres)	Length(ft)
Other Roads	1	N/A	81.78
Watershed	1	14.78	N/A
Ecoregion	1	14.78	N/A
Wetlands Likelihood Layer	24	2.62	N/A
USGS Streams	1	N/A	158.71

## Other Roads

#	STREET_NAM	ROUTE_TYPE	ROUTE_NUMB	Length(ft)
1	SAND RIDGE LN	L-	21	81.78

## Watershed

#	Basin	HUC 8	Area(acres)
1	Salkehatchie	03050208	14.78

## Ecoregion

#	L4_KEY	L3_KEY	Area(acres)
1	63h Carolina Flatwoods	63 Middle Atlantic Coastal Plain	14.78

## Wetlands Likelihood Layer

#	ATTRIBUTE	WETLAND_TY	Area(acres)
1	No Data	No Data	1.90
2	PFO1A	Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	0.36
3	PFO1C	Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	0.18
4	PFO1F	Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	0.16
5	PFO1/4B	Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	0.01
6	PUBHx	Freshwater Pond	< 0.01
7	PFO1B	Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland	< 0.01

## USGS Streams

#	NAME	Length(ft)
1	Beaverdam Branch	158.71

**The Screening**  
widget allows you to define an area of interest and analyze below listed layers  
for potential impacts.

**Boundary:** Cities;  
COG, Watershed; Ecoregion

**Roads &**  
**Bridges:** Statewide Bridges; Roads; State Highways

**Biological**  
**Resources:** T & E Species; Statewide Element Occurrence's; T & E  
Critical Habitat; Oyster Habitat Corridor; Bald Eagle Nests

**Cultural**  
**Resources:** Archaeological Point; Civil War Earthworks; Historic Structures;  
National Register Points; Restricted National Register Points; Survey Lines; Archaeological  
Site; Survey Areas; Historic Areas; National Register Polygon; Restricted  
National Register Polygon

**Protected**  
**Lands:** NWF Wildlife Refuges Area; NRCS Easements; Heritage Preserves; Parks;  
US Forest; Wildlife Management Areas

**WOTUS:** Streams; Lakes; NWI Wetlands; Wetlands  
Likelyhood Layer

**Coastal**

**Resources:** Shellfish Monitoring Station; Critical Area Boundary; Shellfish  
Classification; SCDNR Oyster Habitat; SCDNR Oyster Beds

**Water**

**Quality:** Bio Station; TMDL

**Land and**

**Waste:** Solid Waste Landfill; Underground Storage Tank; Above Ground Storage  
Tank; CERCLA; Compliance and Enforcement; DryCleaners; Leaking Underground  
Storage Tank

**Others:** Soil  
Classification

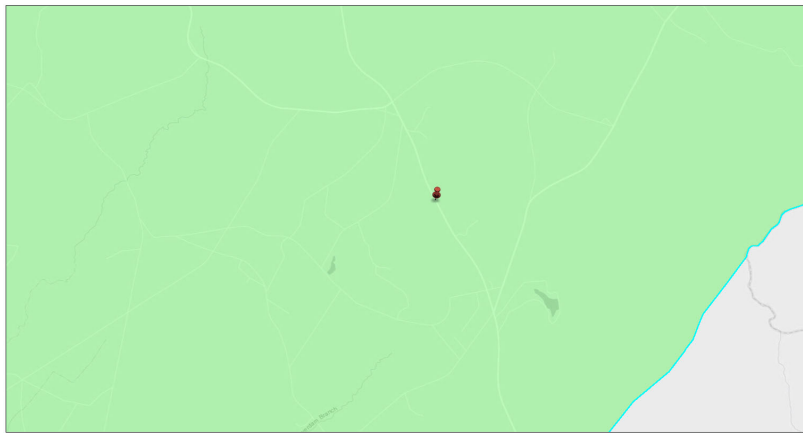


# EJScreen Community Report

This report provides environmental and socioeconomic information for user-defined areas, and combines that data into environmental justice and supplemental indexes.

## Jasper County, SC

Blockgroup: 450539501001  
 Population: 1,938  
 Area in square miles: 89.62



October 16, 2024  
 Project 2  
 Project 1  
 1:36,112  
 0 0.38 0.76 1.5 mi  
 0 0.5 1 2 km  
Esri, HERE, DeLorme, Garmin, GeoTechnologies, Inc., USGS, EPA

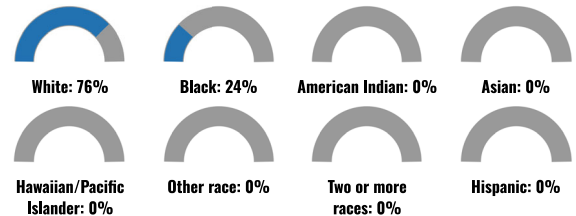
### COMMUNITY INFORMATION



### LANGUAGES SPOKEN AT HOME

LANGUAGE	PERCENT
English	88%
Spanish	7%
Other and Unspecified	4%
Total Non-English	12%

### BREAKDOWN BY RACE



### BREAKDOWN BY AGE



### LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING BREAKDOWN



Notes: Numbers may not sum to totals due to rounding. Hispanic population can be of any race. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2018-2022. Life expectancy data comes from the Centers for Disease Control.

Report for Blockgroup: 450539501001

Report produced October 16, 2024 using EJScreen Version 2.3

# Environmental Justice & Supplemental Indexes

The environmental justice and supplemental indexes are a combination of environmental and socioeconomic information. There are thirteen EJ indexes and supplemental indexes in EJScreen reflecting the 13 environmental indicators. The indexes for a selected area are compared to those for all other locations in the state or nation. For more information and calculation details on the EJ and supplemental indexes, please visit the [EJScreen website](#).

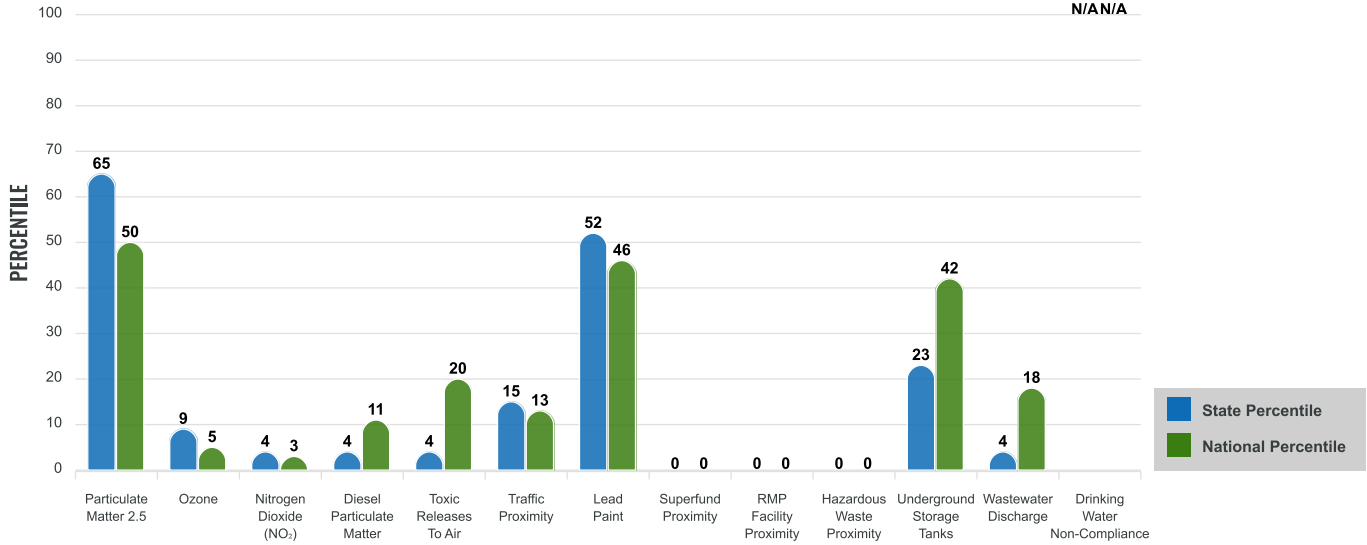
## EJ INDEXES

The EJ indexes help users screen for potential EJ concerns. To do this, the EJ index combines data on low income and people of color populations with a single environmental indicator.

### EJ INDEXES FOR THE SELECTED LOCATION



N/A/N/A



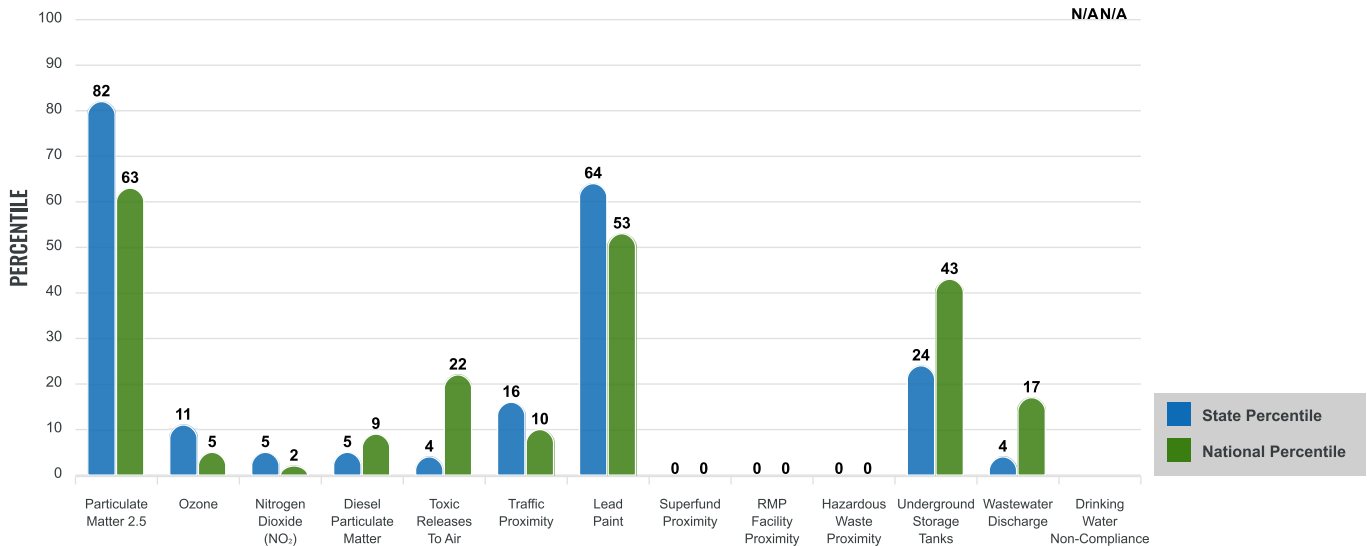
## SUPPLEMENTAL INDEXES

The supplemental indexes offer a different perspective on community-level vulnerability. They combine data on percent low income, percent persons with disabilities, percent less than high school education, percent limited English speaking, and percent low life expectancy with a single environmental indicator.

### SUPPLEMENTAL INDEXES FOR THE SELECTED LOCATION



N/A/N/A



Report for Blockgroup: 450539501001

Report produced October 16, 2024 using EJScreen Version 2.3



# EJScreen Environmental and Socioeconomic Indicators Data

SELECTED VARIABLES	VALUE	STATE AVERAGE	PERCENTILE IN STATE	USA AVERAGE	PERCENTILE IN USA
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL BURDEN INDICATORS</b>					
Particulate Matter 2.5 (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	8.25	7.64	88	8.45	53
Ozone (ppb)	51.5	53.2	10	61.8	4
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> ) (ppbv)	2	4.6	4	7.8	2
Diesel Particulate Matter (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	0.0505	0.116	5	0.191	8
Toxic Releases to Air (toxicity-weighted concentration)	46	3,000	4	4,600	17
Traffic Proximity (daily traffic count/distance to road)	34,000	390,000	16	1,700,000	9
Lead Paint (% Pre-1960 Housing)	0.18	0.16	68	0.3	46
Superfund Proximity (site count/km distance)	0	0.26	0	0.39	0
RMP Facility Proximity (facility count/km distance)	0	0.37	0	0.57	0
Hazardous Waste Proximity (facility count/km distance)	0	0.79	0	3.5	0
Underground Storage Tanks (count/km <sup>2</sup> )	0.084	2.8	21	3.6	33
Wastewater Discharge (toxicity-weighted concentration/m distance)	0.071	1200	4	700000	14
Drinking Water Non-Compliance (points)	N/A	0.22	N/A	2.2	N/A
<b>SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS</b>					
Demographic Index USA	0.91	N/A	N/A	1.34	38
Supplemental Demographic Index USA	1.73	N/A	N/A	1.64	61
Demographic Index State	0.99	1.58	29	N/A	N/A
Supplemental Demographic Index State	1.46	1.56	46	N/A	N/A
People of Color	24%	39%	36	40%	42
Low Income	23%	36%	30	30%	43
Unemployment Rate	3%	6%	50	6%	48
Limited English Speaking Households	0%	1%	0	5%	0
Less Than High School Education	11%	12%	55	11%	62
Under Age 5	5%	5%	57	5%	54
Over Age 64	18%	20%	52	18%	58

\*Diesel particulate matter index is from the EPA's Air Toxics Data Update, which is the Agency's ongoing, comprehensive evaluation of air toxics in the United States. This effort aims to prioritize air toxics, emission sources, and locations of interest for further study. It is important to remember that the air toxics data presented here provide broad estimates of health risks over geographic areas of the country, not definitive risks to specific individuals or locations. More information on the Air Toxics Data Update can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/haps/air-toxics-data-update>.

**Sites reporting to EPA within defined area:**

Superfund .....	0
Hazardous Waste, Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facilities .....	0
Water Dischargers .....	1
Air Pollution .....	0
Brownfields .....	0
Toxic Release Inventory .....	0

**Other community features within defined area:**

Schools .....	0
Hospitals .....	0
Places of Worship .....	7

**Other environmental data:**

Air Non-attainment .....	No
Impaired Waters .....	Yes

Selected location contains American Indian Reservation Lands* .....	No
Selected location contains a "Justice40 (CEJST)" disadvantaged community .....	Yes
Selected location contains an EPA IRA disadvantaged community .....	Yes

Report for Blockgroup: 450539501001

Report produced October 16, 2024 using EJScreen Version 2.3

## EJScreen Environmental and Socioeconomic Indicators Data

### HEALTH INDICATORS

INDICATOR	VALUE	STATE AVERAGE	STATE PERCENTILE	US AVERAGE	US PERCENTILE
Low Life Expectancy	26%	21%	91	20%	94
Heart Disease	6.5	6.2	55	5.8	67
Asthma	10.1	9.9	58	10.3	46
Cancer	6.3	6.6	39	6.4	45
Persons with Disabilities	11%	15.2%	23	13.7%	37

### CLIMATE INDICATORS

INDICATOR	VALUE	STATE AVERAGE	STATE PERCENTILE	US AVERAGE	US PERCENTILE
Flood Risk	7%	12%	47	12%	51
Wildfire Risk	74%	19%	87	14%	88

### CRITICAL SERVICE GAPS

INDICATOR	VALUE	STATE AVERAGE	STATE PERCENTILE	US AVERAGE	US PERCENTILE
Broadband Internet	10%	17%	37	13%	50
Lack of Health Insurance	16%	11%	82	9%	85
Housing Burden	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Transportation Access Burden	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Food Desert	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Report for Blockgroup: 450539501001

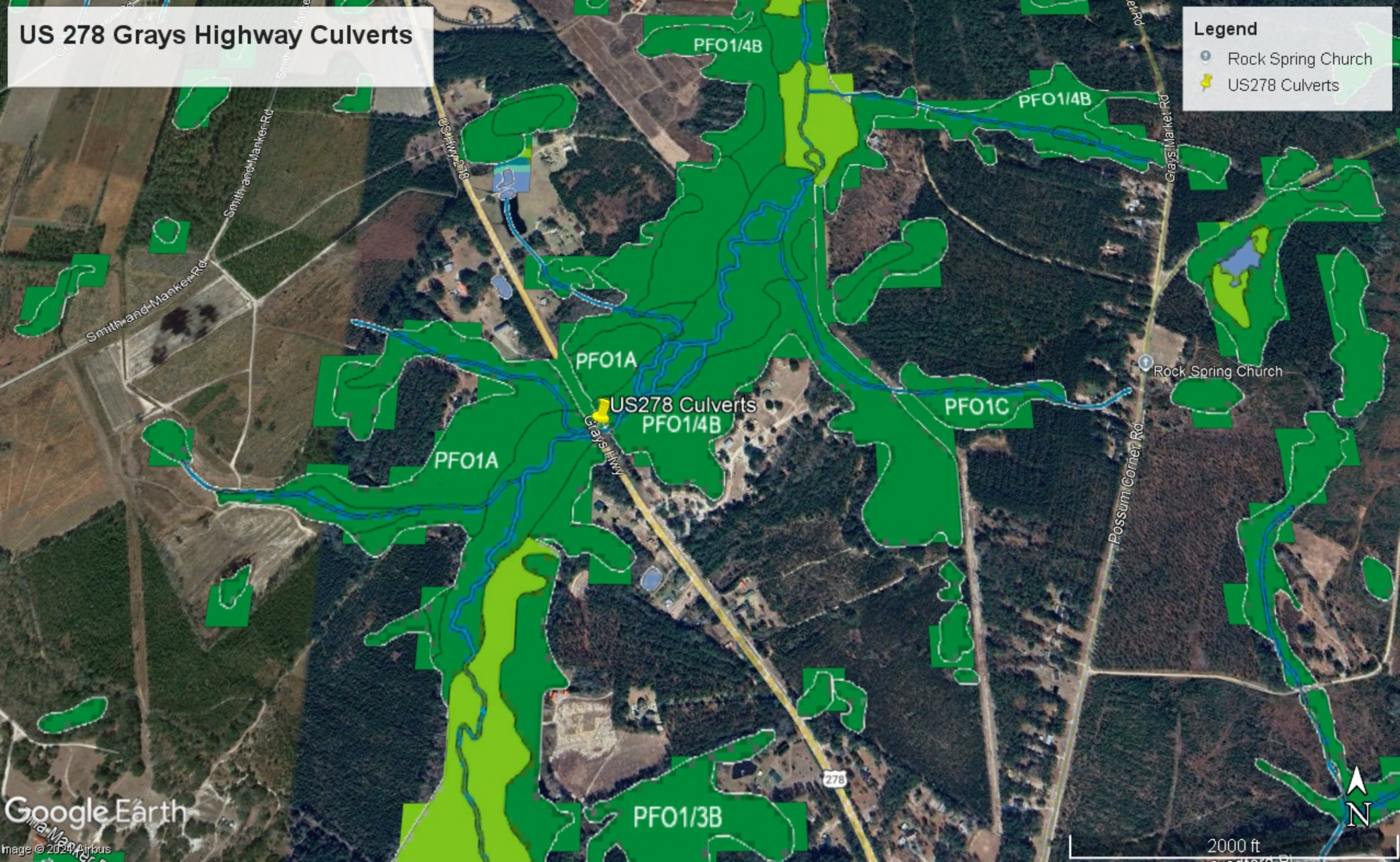
Report produced October 16, 2024 using EJScreen Version 2.3



# US 278 Grays Highway Culverts

**Legend**

- Rock Spring Church
- US278 Culverts

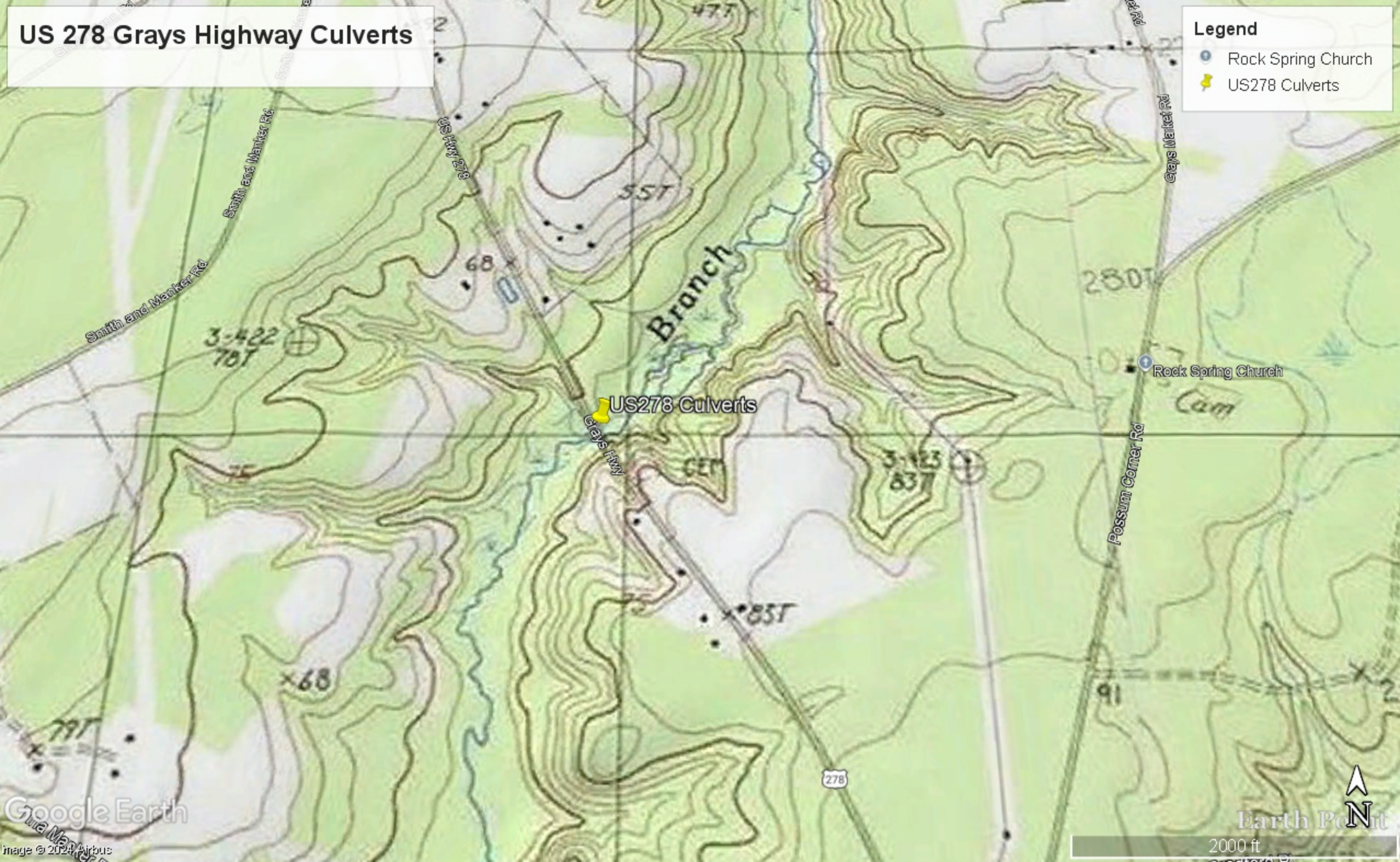




# US 278 Grays Highway Culverts

**Legend**

- Rock Spring Church
- US278 Culverts

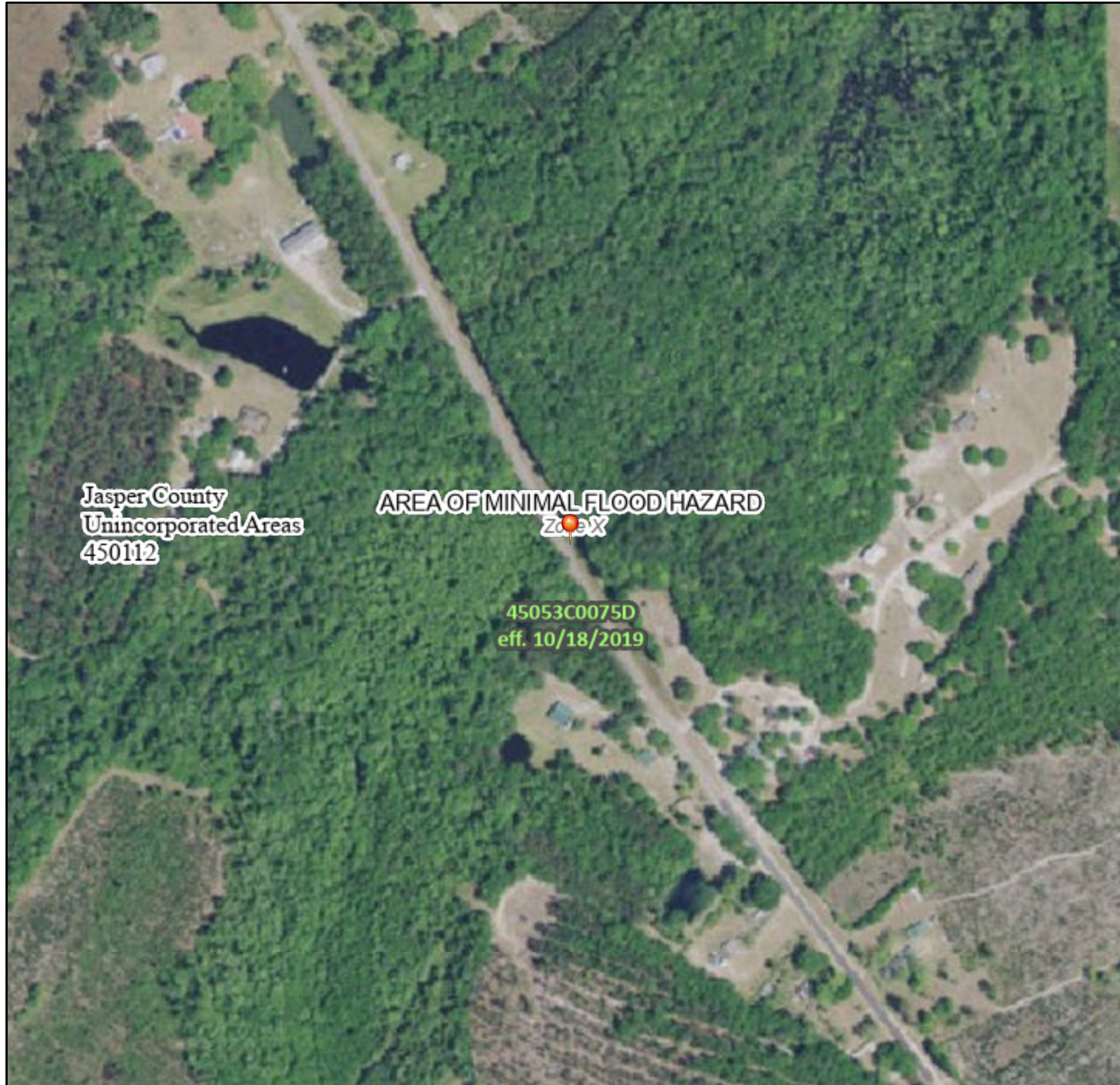




# National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette



81°0'58"W 32°39'38"N



## Legend

SEE FIS REPORT FOR DETAILED LEGEND AND INDEX MAP FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT

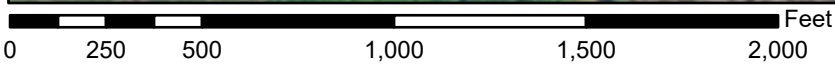
SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS		Without Base Flood Elevation (BFE) <i>Zone A, V, A99</i>
		With BFE or Depth <i>Zone AE, AO, AH, VE, AR</i>
		Regulatory Floodway
OTHER AREAS OF FLOOD HAZARD		0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile <i>Zone X</i>
		Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard <i>Zone X</i>
		Area with Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee. See Notes. <i>Zone X</i>
		Area with Flood Risk due to Levee <i>Zone D</i>
OTHER AREAS		NO SCREEN Area of Minimal Flood Hazard <i>Zone X</i>
		Effective LOMRs
GENERAL STRUCTURES		Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard <i>Zone D</i>
		Channel, Culvert, or Storm Sewer
		Levee, Dike, or Floodwall
OTHER FEATURES		20.2 Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance
		17.5 Water Surface Elevation
		Coastal Transect
		Base Flood Elevation Line (BFE)
		Limit of Study
MAP PANELS		Jurisdiction Boundary
		Coastal Transect Baseline
		Profile Baseline
		Hydrographic Feature
		Digital Data Available
		No Digital Data Available
		Unmapped

The pin displayed on the map is an approximate point selected by the user and does not represent an authoritative property location.

This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards

The flood hazard information is derived directly from the authoritative NFHL web services provided by FEMA. This map was exported on **10/16/2024 at 10:07 AM** and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time.

This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legend, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date. Map images for unmapped and unmodernized areas cannot be used for regulatory purposes.



1:6,000

81°0'21"W 32°39'8"N

Basemap Imagery Source: USGS National Map 2023

**South Carolina Department of Transportation  
Location and Hydraulic Design of Encroachments on Floodplains Checklist**

23 CFR 650, this regulation shall apply to all encroachments and to all actions which affect base floodplains, except for repairs made with emergency funds. Note: These studies shall be summarized in the environmental review documents prepared pursuant to 23 CFR 771.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

US 278 Grays Highway Emergency Repairs (TS Debby).

- A. Narrative Describing Purpose and Need for Project
- a. Relevant Project History:
  - b. General Project Description and Nature of Work (attach Location and Project Map):
  - c. Major Issues and Concerns:

Raodway has been damaged from tropical storm Debby and is no longer safe or functional. Route is currently closed to traffic and a detour is in place. Repair under emergency funds.

- B. Are there any floodplain(s) regulated by FEMA located in the project area?  
Yes  No

- C. Will the placing of fill occur within a 100-year floodplain?  
Yes  No

- D. Will the existing profile grade be raised within the floodplain?

FEMA ZONE X - No profile grade raised within a floodplain.

- E. If applicable, please discuss the practicability of alternatives to any longitudinal encroachments.

- F. Please include a discussion of the following: commensurate with the significance of the risk or environmental impact for all alternatives containing encroachments and those actions which would support base floodplain development:

a. What are the risks associated with implementation of the action?

Risks are minimal. The culverts are being replaced because of storm damage and possible beaver dams within culverts blocking conveyance. The new bridge should qualify for a statement of no impact.

b. What are the impacts on the natural and beneficial floodplain values?

No impacts are anticipated.

c. What measures were used to minimize floodplain impacts associated with the action?

No impacts are anticipated.

d. Were any measures used to restore and preserve the natural and beneficial floodplain values impacted by the action?

No impacts are anticipated.

G. Please discuss the practicability of alternatives to any significant encroachments or any support of incompatible floodplain development.

No encroachments are anticipated.

H. Were local, state, and federal water resources and floodplain management agencies consulted to determine if the proposed highway action is consistent with existing watershed and floodplain management programs and to obtain current information on development and proposed actions in the affected? Please include agency documentation.

All analysis for the project will be performed in accordance with SCDOT, FEMA, and local regulations.

Levi McLeod  
SCDOT Hydraulic Engineer

Digitally signed by Levi McLeod  
Date: 2024.10.16 14:37:23  
-0400

10/16/24

Date

# BRIDGE SCOPE AND RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ROAD #: \_\_\_\_\_

STREAM CROSSING: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose & Need for the Project:

## I. FEMA Acknowledgement

Is this project located in a regulated FEMA Floodway?  Yes  No

Panel Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (See Attached)

## II. FEMA Floodmap Investigation

FEMA Flood Profile Sheet Number \_\_\_\_\_ illustrates the existing 100 year flood:

- Passes under the existing low chord elevation.
- Is in contact with the existing low chord elevation.
- Overtops the existing bridge finished grade elevation.

## III. No Rise/CLOMR Preliminary Determination

Preliminary assessment indicates this project may be constructed to meet the "No-Rise" requirements. A detailed hydraulic analysis will be performed to verify this assessment.

Justification:

Preliminary assessment indicates this project may require a CLOMR/LOMR. Impacts will be determined by a detailed hydraulic analysis.

Justification:



# BRIDGE SCOPE AND RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

## IV. Preliminary Bridge Assessment

### A. Locate Existing Plans

a. Bridge Plans  Yes File No. \_\_\_\_\_ Sheet No. \_\_\_\_\_ (See Attached)  
 No

b. Road Plans  Yes File No. \_\_\_\_\_ Sheet No. \_\_\_\_\_ (See Attached)  
 No

### B. Historical Highwater Data

a. USGS Gage  Yes Gage No. \_\_\_\_\_ Results: \_\_\_\_\_  
 No

b. SCDOT/USGS Documented Highwater Elevations  
 Yes Results: \_\_\_\_\_  
 No

c. Existing Plans  Yes See Above  
 No

## V. Field Review

### A. Existing Bridge

Length: \_\_\_\_\_ ft. Width: \_\_\_\_\_ ft. Max. span Length: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

Alignment:  Tangent  Curved

Bridge Skewed:  Yes  No Angle: \_\_\_\_\_

End Abutment Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Riprap on End Fills:  Yes  No Condition: \_\_\_\_\_

Superstructure Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Substructure Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Utilities Present:  Yes  No  
Describe:

Debris Accumulation on Bridge: Percent Blocked Horizontally: \_\_\_\_\_ %  
Percent Blocked Vertically: \_\_\_\_\_ %

Hydraulic Problems:  Yes  No  
Describe:

# BRIDGE SCOPE AND RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

## V. Field Review (cont.)

### B. Hydraulic Features

a. Scour Present:  Yes  No Location: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Distance from F.G. to Normal Water Elevation: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

c. Distance from Low Steel to Normal Water Elev.: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

d. Distance from F.G. to High Water Elevation: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

e. Distance from Low Steel to High Water Elev.: \_\_\_\_\_ ft.

f. Channel Banks Stable:  Yes  No

Describe:

g. Soil Type: \_\_\_\_\_

h. Exposed Rock:  Yes  No Location: \_\_\_\_\_

i. Give Description and Location of any structures or other property that could be damaged due to additional backwater.

### C. Existing Roadway Geometry

a. Can the existing roadway be closed for an On-Alignment Bridge Replacement

Yes  No

Describe:

If "yes", does the existing vertical and horizontal curves meet the proposed design speed criteria?

If "No", will the proposed bridge be:

Staged Constructed

Replaced on New Alignment





## DETAILED DAMAGE INSPECTION REPORT

(Title 23, Federal-aid Highways)

Report Number <b>27-003-ER-RG</b>	
Sheet	<u>1</u> of <u>2</u>
FHWA Disaster Number	SC202402
Inspection Date	8/9/2024
Federal-aid Route Number	US 278
State	County
SC	Jasper

Location (Name of Road and Milepost)

Jasper - US 278 (Grays Highway)  
32.6563889  
-81.0111111

Description of Damage:

Double 12'x12' (approx.) culverts exceeded capacity, and flooding eroded the entire section of roadway.  
\*Hydrology Study Required

### Cost Estimate

Emergency Repair	Description of Work to Date (Equipment, Labor, and Materials)	Unit	Unit Price	Quantity	Cost	
					Completed	Remaining
	Mobilization (per site)	EA	\$32,948.89	1		\$32,948.89
	Traffic Control (Road Already Closed)	EA	\$3,652.84	1		\$3,652.84
	Unclassified Excavation	CY	\$84.33	1,800		\$151,794.00
	Geotextile under Rip Rap	SY	\$15.90	320		\$5,088.00
	Surge Stone In Place	TON	\$176.70	145		\$25,621.50
	Variable Milling (butt joints)	SY	\$50.23	288		\$14,466.24
	Raised Pavement Markers	EA	\$21.31	4		\$85.24
	Rip-Rap	TON	\$242.45	100		\$24,245.00
	Permanent Cover	ACRE	\$4,330.00	0		\$433.00
	Silt Fence	LF	\$11.05	560		\$6,188.00
	Removal & Disposal of Existing Pavement (Asphalt or Concrete) - 6in	SY	\$49.18	520		\$25,573.60
	Borrow Excavation (1001 CY and above)	CY	\$74.91	5,520		\$413,503.20
	Asphalt Base Course - includes Binder (101 tons & above)	TON	\$297.13	130		\$38,626.90
	Asphalt Surface Course - includes Binder (1-100 tons)	TON	\$392.79	97		\$38,100.63
	Temporary Pavement Markings	LF	\$3.80	1,216		\$4,620.80
	Rem. & Disp. of Existing Culvert	EA	\$175,000.00	2		\$350,000.00
	12'x12' Culvert	LF	\$3,000.00	90		\$270,000.00
Method					Subtotal	\$1,404,947.84
<input type="checkbox"/> Local Forces <input type="checkbox"/> State Forces <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contract					PE/CE	8% \$112,395.83
					Emergency Repair Total	\$1,517,343.67



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

# DETAILED DAMAGE INSPECTION REPORT

(Title 23, Federal-aid Highways)

Report Number <b>27-003-ER-RG</b>
Sheet <u>2</u> of <u>2</u>
FHWA Disaster Number SC202402
Inspection Date 8/9/2024
Federal-aid Route Number US 278
State SC                      County Jasper

Location (Name of Road and Milepost)  
Jasper - US 278 (Grays Highway)  
32.6563889  
-81.0111111

Description of Damage:  
Double 12'x12' (approx.) culverts exceeded capacity, and flooding eroded the entire section of roadway.  
\*Hydrology Study Required

### Cost Estimate

Permanent Restoration	Description of Work to Date (Equipment, Labor, and Materials)	Unit	Unit Price	Quantity	Cost	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Forces <input type="checkbox"/> State Forces <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Contract					Subtotal
	PE/CE					18%      \$0.00
					Right-of-Way      \$0.00	
					Perm. Repair Totals	

Environmental Assessment Recommendation <input type="checkbox"/> Categorical Exclusion <input type="checkbox"/> EA/EIS	Estimated Total	\$1,517,343.67
Recommendation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Ineligible	FHWA Engineer RICKELE RESHARD GENNIE	Digitally signed by RICKELE RESHARD GENNIE Date: 2024.08.13 07:18:31 -04'00'
Concurrence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	State Engineer 	Jeremy Yuhas 2024.08.12 17:18:07 -04'00'
Concurrence <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Local Agency Representative	Date



