US Army Corps
Of Engineers
Wilmington District

PUBLIC NOTICE

Issue Date: May 17, 2018
Comment Deadline: June 15, 2018
Corps Action ID Number: SAW-2015-00263

The Wilmington District, Corps of Engineers (Corps or USACE) received an application from Mr. Joe Walker of Western Carolina University (WCU) seeking Department of the Army authorization for 500 linear feet (lf) of permanent stream impacts to an unnamed tributary (UT) of Cullowhee Creek (parking lot construction); 0.293 acres (ac) of permanent wetland impacts (parking lot construction); and 0.09 ac of permanent wetland impacts (intermural fields improvements), associated with WCU 2014 Master Plan Improvement projects (Central Drive Parking Lot and Intramural Fields Improvements) in Cullowhee, Jackson County, North Carolina.

Specific plans and location information are described below and shown on the attached maps, figures, and plans. This Public Notice and all attached plans are also available on the Wilmington District Web Site at http://www.saw.usace.army.mil/Missions/RegulatoryPermitProgram.aspx

Applicant:
Mr. Joe Walker
Western Carolina University
3476 Old Cullowhee Road
Cullowhee, North Carolina 28723

AGENT (if applicable):
Mr. Clement Riddle
ClearWater Environmental Consultants, Inc.
32 Clayton Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

Authority

The Corps evaluates this application and decides whether to issue, conditionally issue, or deny the proposed work pursuant to applicable procedures of the following Statutory Authorities:

☒ Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344)

☐ Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403)

☐ Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (33 U.S.C. 1413)

Location

Directions to Site: The project sites are within the WCU main campus. The proposed Central Drive parking lot site is an approximately 6-ac tract off Central Drive located in the eastern part of the campus. The Intermural Field site is an approximately 10-ac tract between The Village student housing area and the Schrader Soccer Field located in the northwestern part of the campus.

To get to the Intermural Field site from the intersection of NC Highway 107 and Centennial Drive in Cullowhee, turn east onto Centennial Drive. At the traffic round-about, go north onto Memorial Drive, turn left at the first road next to the track-soccer-tennis athletic complex. The site is north of the Schrader Soccer Field.

To get to the Central Drive parking lot site from the intersection of NC Highway 107 and Centennial Drive in Cullowhee, turn east onto Centennial Drive. At the traffic round-about, continue on Centennial Drive for approximately 1 mile and turn right onto Central Drive and head south for 0.4 mile. The project site is on the west side of Central Drive across from the Central Drive Residence Hall.

Project Area (acres):	Central Drive Parking Lot 6-ac / Intermural Field 10-ac
Nearest Town:	Cullowhee
Nearest Waterway:	UT Cullowhee Creek and Cullowhee Creek
River Basin:	Tuckasegee (06010203)
Latitude and Longitude:	35.30669 N, 83.17617 W, Central Parking Lot 35.31466 N, 83.18671 W, Intermural Field

Existing Site Conditions

Cullowhee is a small urban developed university town surrounded mostly by sparsely rural developed property. The WCU main campus is developed university property containing classroom, residential, administrative, dinning, recreation, athletic, industrial, and preforming arts facilities and building. Within the campus there are established support features, such as, water and sewer systems, electrical distribution, roads, parking, storm water conveyance systems, etc.

As noted above, the project sites are within the WCU main campus and include a 6-ac tract off Central Drive located in the eastern part of the campus and a 10-acre tract located between The Village student housing area and the Schrader Soccer Field in the northwestern part of the campus. These projects are part of the WCU 2014 Campus Master Plan. The projects would increase the availability of parking spaces in the upper-campus area by constructing a surface parking lot capable of providing 441 parking spots adjacent to Central Drive and improve the usability of the existing intramural sport fields by constructing a more even grade and better drained surface.

The parking lot project site was developed residential property prior to being acquired by WCU. The site is a steep valley between two topographic terraces, with an elevation around 2200 feet (ft) above mean sea level (msl). The intramural field project site is an open mowed recreational field complex having portions used for parking and walking paths with sparse trees at the perimeter. This site is a relatively flat topographic flood bench of Cullowhee Creek with an elevation of approximately 2060 ft above msl.

The project areas are situated in the Blue Ridge physiographic province and in the Southern Crystalline Ridges and Mountains Ecoregion of North Carolina. The Blue Ridge province is a mountainous zone that extends northeast-southwest from southern Pennsylvania to central Alabama. The physiography of the Jackson County consists of high, intermediate, and low mountains; floodplains; and low stream terraces.

Waters at the project sites are a UT of Cullowhee Creek and Cullowhee Creek, which is a tributary of the Tuckasegee River. These waters are part of the Tennessee River system and lay within the Tuckasegee River watershed (HUC 06010203), which is a sub-basin of the Little Tennessee River. This sub-basin contains some of the most pristine, high-quality waters in the state and supports numerous trout streams. As designated by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) – Division of Water Resources (DWR), streams at the sites are classified as class C secondary recreation and trout waters.

There are wetlands located within both sites and are small abutting features associated with stream channels. Within the proposed project boundaries there are the following amounts of jurisdictional waters of the U.S. (WoUS):

Summary of Jurisdictional Waters

Aquatic Resource	Amount
Stream	601 lf
Wetland[1]	0.776 ac
Open Water	0 ac

[1]0.346 ac of wetlands are in the proposed parking lot project area and 0.43 ac of wetlands are in the intramural field project area.

The Corps issued jurisdictional determinations (JD) for the intermural field project area in December 2013 (Action ID SAW-2013-02323) and for the Central Dive parking lot project area in February 2018 (Action ID SAW-2015-00263). Previous USACE permitted regulatory projects for WCU is summarized in the following table:

Action ID Number	NWP / GP Number	Wetland (ac)		Stream (lf)	
		Temporary	Permanent	Temporary	Permanent
2003-30382	**14**				**60**
2009-00395	**14**				**55**
Impact Totals		**0**	**0**	**0**	**115**
Total Loss of Waters of the U.S. (ac)		**0**	Total Loss of Waters of the U.S. (lf)		**115**
Required Wetland Mitigation (ac)		**0**	Required Stream Mitigation (lf)		**0**

Soil series present at the sites include, Braddock-Urban Land complex, Cowee-Evard-Urban Land complex, and Udorthents-Urban Lands complex.

During site visits in October 2017, ClearWater Environmental Consultants, Inc., (CEC) identified several habitat types at the project sites. The following is a summary of each of the habitat types identified on-site.

Maintained lawn/field habitat includes predominantly herbaceous vegetation and land that is mowed at regular intervals. A mowed grassy field is maintained on terraces to the east and west of the stream valley at the parking lot site. This area has about 75% herbaceous cover with fescue (*Festuca* sp.) and forbs, and about 25% bare soil. The flat intramural fields are maintained turfgrass with small patches of sedges, soft rush, and creeping jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*) in wet areas.

Shrub/sapling open edge habitat is located along edge of the maintained lawn/field habitat at the parking lot site and is rife with invasive shrub and vine plants. The dominant plant species are Chinese privet, (*Ligustrum sinense*), Sawtooth blackberry (*Rubus argutus*), Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*), and kudzu (*Puereria montana*).

Early successional bottomland mixed hardwood habitat occupy a narrow strip on the sloped terrace between the shrub wetland and the shrub/sapling open edge habitats at the parking lot site and next to Cullowhee Creek at the intermural field site. This habitat contains bottomland mixed hardwoods and conifers including sparse, mature black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), and Eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*), with an understory of Chinese privet, and with a moderately dense vine layer with English ivy (*Hedera helix*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), and poison ivy.

The low areas next the sandy-bottom UT of Cullowhee Creek provide shrub wetland habitat at the parking lot site. Dominant species consist of sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), tag alder (*Alnus serrulata*), Chinese privet, black willow (*Salix nigra*), Sawtooth blackberry, multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), sedges (*Carex spp*), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), rice cut grass (*Leersia oryzoides*), bugleweed (*Lycopus americanus)*, and jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*).

Freshwater stream habitat include the streambeds and banks of streams at both sites. Stream bed substrate is sand, gravel and cobble. A mixed hardwood forest type is predominant adjacent to stream channels.

Terrestrial communities at the project sites are comprised of developed urban areas, with small areas of vegetate tracts, and open habitats that may support a diverse number of wildlife species. Representative mammal, bird, reptile, and amphibian species commonly occurring in the habitats noted above is listed in the flowing paragraph. Information on these species that typically use the habitats at the project site was obtained from relevant literature, mainly the Biodiversity of the Southeastern United States, Upland Terrestrial Communities (Martin et al. 1993).

Mammal species that commonly occur in these habitats include eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*); gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*); eastern chipmunk (*Tamis striatus*), southern flying squirrel (Glaucomys volans), various vole, rat, and mice species; raccoon (*Procyon lotor*); Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*); white-tailed deer (Odocoileus virginiana), and black bear (*Ursus americanus*). Bird species that commonly use these habitats include indigo bunting (*Passerina cyanea*), prairie warbler (*Dendroica discolor*), northern cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), field sparrow (*Spizella pusilla*), rufous-sided towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*), red-eyed vireo (*Vireo olivaceous*), scarlet tanager (*Piranga olivacea*), blue jay (*Cyanocitta cristata*), and Carolina chickadee (*Poecile carolinensis*). Predatory birds may include several hawk and owl species and turkey vulture (*Cathartes aura*). Reptile and amphibian species that may use the terrestrial community include copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix*), eastern corn snake (*Pantherophis guttatus*), eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*), eastern fence lizard (*Sceloporus undulatus*), five-lined skink (*Plestiodon fasciatus*), spring peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*), timber rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*), and American bull frog (*Rana catesbeiana*). The dominant species of salamander in these habitats are dusky salamanders (*Desmognathus* spp.).

CEC conducted a file review of records maintained by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NHP). The desktop literature review involved a review of the FWS list of protected species in Jackson County and the NHP Element Occurrence Data on which NHP identifies current and historic occurrences of listed species for a specific locale. The FWS lists 11 species as occurring in Jackson County that are subject to Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7 consultation (see table below). The NHP database identifies 19 element occurrences (EO) within a 1-mile radius of the project site; none of which hold Federal status and are subject to Section 7 consultation.

Common Name	*Scientific Name*	Federal Status
Bog turtle	*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*	T (S/A)
Carolina Northern Flying Squirrel	*Glaucomys sabrinus coloratus*	E
Gray bat	*Myotis grisescens*	E
Indiana Bat	*Myotis sodalis*	E
Northern Long-Eared Bat (NLEB)	*Myotis septentrionalis*	T
Appalachian elktoe	*Alasmidonta raveneliana*	E
Rusty-patched bumble bee	*Bombus affinis*	E
Spruce-Fir Moss Spider	*Microhexura montivaga*	E
Small Whorled Pogonia	*Isotria medeoloides*	T
Swamp Pink	*Helonias bullata*	T
Rock Gnome Lichen	*Gymnoderma lineare*	E

E - Endangered. A taxon "in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range."
T - Threatened. A taxon "likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range."
S/A – Similarity of appearance

Review of the National Park Service National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) GIS Public Dataset and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) HPOWEB GIS Web Service indicted one historic property within 2 miles of the two project areas. This historic property was the Joyner Building (JK0004) on the campus of WCU and was located approximately 0.15 mile north of the proposed Central Drive parking lot project site. The Joyner Building was a historic classroom and administrative building. The building burned in 1981 and has been replaced by the Joyner Plaza.

An archeological survey was performed by TRC Environmental Corporation and a report was prepared in May 2017, *Archeological Survey and Testing for the Proposed Western Carolina University Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Project, Jackson County North Carolina*. This study included an evaluation of the STEM site situated along Memorial Drive at the northern edge of the WCU campus and two soil disposal sites. One of the soil disposal sites for the STEM project is the location the proposed Central Drive parking lot project. Investigation of this sites along Central Drive included visual inspection and excavation of 21 shovel tests. No cultural resources were identified.

Applicant's Stated Purpose

The project purpose is to enact two development recommendations provided within the WCU 2014 Campus Master Plan. These recommendations include meeting a growing demand for parking and maximizing the utility of existing open spaces on campus. The project proposes to provide additional parking resources to the eastern WCU campus along the southern portion of

Central Drive adjacent to the existing Harrill Lot. More specifically, the parking lot project would add 441 spaces to the WCU parking capacity to offset anticipated parking losses in this portion of campus, and to accommodate increasing parking demand due to expected increases in enrollment. The project will also improve the usability of the existing intramural sport fields by constructing a more even grade and better drained surface.

Project Description

The WCU 2014 Master Plan outlines strategies to manage future student growth and identifies needed facilities. WCU enrollment is expected to grow by 2% annually, reaching a projected population of 11,171 by 2023. The plan addresses issues related to new building needs (classroom, administrative and dorms), utilization of existing space, parking and transportation, technology infrastructure, sustainability, safety and security, preservation of campus heritage, and integration of the campus with the surrounding community.

The plan also addresses a framework for pedestrian and vehicular circulation that stitches together the land use diagram and guides opportunities for creating outdoor places and activity nodes. Existing inefficient parking in the pedestrian core conflicts with primary pedestrian movements. The plan establishes that parking should be relocated and consolidated toward the perimeter of the walkable academic core and linked to pedestrian paths. Perimeter parking allows daily users and visitors to easily find a parking a space and walk to their building rather than weaving through campus to search for a place.

The construction of Central Drive parking lot would provide parking resources in geographic proximity to areas not served by proposed expansion of existing structured parking. This parking lot would add parking capacity on the east side of campus. Also, the construction of Central Drive parking lot will incrementally address an increase in demand for parking spaces as concurrent projects in this portion of campus reduce the existing parking capacity on campus. The parking capacity to be provided by Central Drive parking lot is one component proposed to address the need for an additional 1,860 parking spaces WCU forecast to need by 2027.

The existing intramural fields currently provide open space for student activities, however the field is underutilized due to two consistently wet areas of soil. Proposed improvements to the field include evenly grading these wet areas and adding fill to better support turf grass and provide an even playing surface, thereby maximizing use of the limited open space on campus.

The applicant proposes to fill a total of 0.383 acres of wetlands and to fill (culvert) a total of 500 linear feet of streams associated with the proposed projects.

Summary of Proposed Impacts to Jurisdictional Waters

Impact	Aquatic Resource	Type of Impact	Amount
Stream Impacts			
Central Drive Parking Lot	UT Cullowhee Creek	Permanent (culvert)	500 lf
		TOTAL	500 lf
Wetland Impacts			
Central Drive Parking Lot	Wetland	Permanent (fill and grading)	0.293 ac
Intermural Field	Wetland	Permanent (fill and grading)	0.09 ac
		TOTAL	0.383 ac

Avoidance and Minimization

The applicant provided the following information in support of efforts to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the aquatic environment. Pre-project site planning was conducted to delineate and field verify jurisdictional WoUS within the proposed project areas. These features were used to select a viable alternative to avoid and minimize impacts to aquatic resources.

In preparing the 2014 Master Plan, WCU considered a variety of constraints, including impacts to streams and wetlands. The applicant has proposed a plan which avoids and minimizes impacts to streams and wetlands to the greatest extent practicable and feasible while still accomplishing the overall project purpose.

During design of the Central Drive parking lot, the applicant considered several site layouts, however, these plans were unable to efficiently maximize parking expansion potential of the proposed parking lot. The parcel is bisected with a continuous stream and wetland complex, it would be impossible to fully utilize the lot, while avoiding these features.

The existing 10-ac intermural field area has 0.43 ac of jurisdictional wetlands. The two wetland areas proposed to be filled are a total of 0.09 ac in size and are located in portions of the field currently being utilized by students and future usage in this part of the intermural field is expected to increase.

Compensatory Mitigation

The proposed projects involve permanent impacts to jurisdictional WoUS. Upon completion and implementation of practical avoidance and minimization efforts, a total of 0.383 acres of permanent wetland impacts and 500 lf of permanent stream impacts associated with Central

Drive parking lot project and improvements to the usability of the existing intramural sport fields will result in the a permanent loss of WoUS. These unavoidable permanent losses of WoUS will require compensatory mitigation.

CEC conducted NC Wetland Assessment Method (NCWAM) and NC Stream Assessment Method (NCSAM) for the stream and wetlands to be impacted. The applicable methodology calculated an overall rating of "Medium" for both stream and wetlands. The applicant is proposing to mitigate for wetland and stream impacts at a 1:1 ratio through NC Division of Mitigation Services (DMS). By letter dated March 12, 2018, DMS has indicated they are willing to accept payment for wetland impacts that may require compensatory mitigation up to 615 lf of stream and 0.383 acres of wetlands associated with the projects, as well as, prior impacts to jurisdictional streams conducted at WCU's main campus during previous USACE authorized projects.

Essential Fish Habitat

Pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, this Public Notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements. The Corps' initial determination is that the proposed project would not affect EFH or associated fisheries managed by the South Atlantic or Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Councils or the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Cultural Resources

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, Appendix C of 33 CFR Part 325, and the 2005 Revised Interim Guidance for Implementing Appendix C, the District Engineer consulted district files and records and the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places and initially determines that:

☐ Should historic properties, or properties eligible for inclusion in the National Register, be present within the Corps' permit area; the proposed activity requiring the DA permit (the undertaking) is a type of activity that will have no potential to cause an effect to an historic properties.

☒ No historic properties, nor properties eligible for inclusion in the National Register, are present within the Corps' permit area; therefore, there will be no historic properties affected. The Corps subsequently requests concurrence from the SHPO (or THPO).

☐ Properties ineligible for inclusion in the National Register are present within the Corps' permit area; there will be no historic properties affected by the proposed work. The Corps subsequently requests concurrence from the SHPO (or THPO).

☐ Historic properties, or properties eligible for inclusion in the National Register, are present within the Corps' permit area; however, the undertaking will have no adverse effect on these historic properties. The Corps subsequently requests concurrence from the SHPO (or THPO).

☐ Historic properties, or properties eligible for inclusion in the National Register, are present within the Corps' permit area; moreover, the undertaking may have an adverse effect on these historic properties. The Corps subsequently initiates consultation with the SHPO (or THPO).

☐ The proposed work takes place in an area known to have the potential for the presence of prehistoric and historic cultural resources; however, the area has not been formally surveyed for the presence of cultural resources. No sites eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places are known to be present in the vicinity of the proposed work. Additional work may be necessary to identify and assess any historic or prehistoric resources that may be present.

SHPO and applicable tribal historic preservation offices (THPO) will be notified via Public Notice about the project and will be given the opportunity to comment on the project and its potential effects on cultural resources.

The District Engineer's final effect determination will be based upon submitted comments to this public notices from SHPO and/or THPO; and further coordination with the SHPO and/or THPO, as appropriate and required; and with full consideration given to the proposed undertaking's potential direct and indirect effects on historic properties within the Corps' permit area.

Endangered Species

Pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, the Corps reviewed the project area, examined all information provided by the applicant and consulted the latest North Carolina Natural Heritage Database. Based on available information:

☐ The Corps determines that the proposed project would not affect federally listed endangered or threatened species or their formally designated critical habitat.

☐ The Corps determines that the proposed project may affect, but not likely to adversely affect federally listed endangered or threatened species or their formally designated critical habitat. The Corps initiates consultation under Section 7 of the ESA and will not make a permit decision until the consultation process is complete.

☒ The Corps is not aware of the presence of species listed as threatened or endangered or their critical habitat formally designated pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) within the project area. The Corps will make a final determination on the effects of the proposed project upon additional review of the project and completion of any necessary biological assessment and/or consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or National Marine Fisheries Service.

The FWS will be notified via Public Notice about the project and will be given the opportunity to comment on the project and its potential effects on threatened and endangered species.

The District Engineer's final effect determination will be based upon submitted comments to this public notices from FWS; and further coordination with the FWS, as appropriate and required; and with full consideration given to the proposed undertaking's potential direct and indirect effects on federally threatened or endangered listed species and/or their formally designated critical habitat within the Corps' permit area.

Other Required Authorizations

The Corps forwards this notice and all applicable application materials to the appropriate State agencies for review.

North Carolina Division of Water Resources (NCDWR): The Corps will generally not make a final permit decision until the NCDWR issues, denies, or waives the state Certification as required by Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (PL 92-500). The receipt of the application and this public notice, combined with the appropriate application fee, at the NCDWR Central Office in Raleigh constitutes initial receipt of an application for a 401 Certification. A waiver will be deemed to occur if the NCDWR fails to act on this request for certification within sixty days of receipt of a complete application. Additional information regarding the 401 Certification may be reviewed at the NCDWR Central Office, 401 and Buffer Permitting Unit, 512 North Salisbury Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27604-2260. All persons desiring to make comments regarding the application for a 401 Certification should do so, in writing, by June 15, 2018, to:

NCDWR Central Office
Attention: Ms. Karen Higgins, 401 and Buffer Permitting Unit
(USPS mailing address): 1617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1617

Or,

(physical address): 512 North Salisbury Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27604

North Carolina Division of Coastal Management (NCDCM):

☐ The application did not include a certification that the proposed work complies with and would be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the approved North Carolina Coastal Zone Management Program. Pursuant to 33 CFR 325.2 (b)(2) the Corps cannot issue a Department of Army (DA) permit for the proposed work until the applicant submits such a certification to the Corps and the NCDCM, and the NCDCM notifies the Corps that it concurs with the applicant's consistency certification. As the application did not include the consistency certification, the Corps will request, upon receipt,, concurrence or objection from the NCDCM.

☒ Based upon all available information, the Corps determines that this application for a Department of Army (DA) permit does not involve an activity which would affect the coastal zone, which is defined by the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Act (16 U.S.C. § 1453).

Evaluation

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values (in accordance with Executive Order 11988), land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. For activities involving the discharge of dredged or fill materials in waters of the United States, the evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will include application of the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines.

Commenting Information

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State and local agencies and officials, including any consolidated State Viewpoint or written position of the Governor; Indian Tribes and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) and/or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. Requests for a public hearing shall be granted, unless the District Engineer determines that the issues raised are insubstantial or there is otherwise no valid interest to be served by a hearing.

The Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District will receive written comments pertinent to the proposed work, as outlined above, until 5pm, June 15, 2018. Comments should be submitted to:

Mr. David Brown
USACE Wilmington District – Asheville Regulatory Field Office
151 Patton Avenue, Room 208
Asheville, North Carolina, 28801-5006