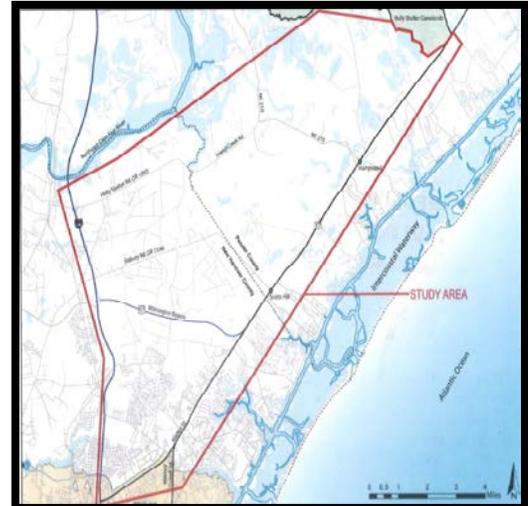




NCDOT/ Hampstead Bypass (Regulatory)

- **Regulatory Action:** Reviewing NCDOT's request for a wetland fill permit under the NEPA/EIS process associated with the extension of Military Cutoff Road, referred to as the Hampstead Bypass.
- **Current Concerns:** Environmental concerns include significant wetland impacts (over 200 acres), and potential impacts to federally listed endangered species habitat used by the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker.



CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NC – 07

DATE: 8 April 2013

1. **PURPOSE:**

To provide the status of the proposed Hampstead Bypass, New Hanover and Pender Counties, North Carolina. (T.I.P. No. U-4751 and R-3300, Action ID SAW-2007-1386).

1. **BACKGROUND:**

a. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT) is currently pursuing the permit of a new highway extending Military Cutoff Road in New Hanover County to I-140 and continuing northeast around Hampstead to US Hwy 17 just below Holly Shelter Gamelands, Pender County.

b. The Corps is acting as the lead Federal Agency and the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was released in the fall of 2011.

c. The project currently is being reviewed within the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/404 Merger Process, a streamline process intended to blend the requirements of NEPA with the 404 b(1) guidelines of the Clean Water Act.

d. The most recent DOT Merger team (Project Delivery Team) meeting was held 31 October 2012.

e. The DOT must enter into consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service before the permit

PROJECT INFORMATION – NCDOT/Hampstead Bypass (Regulatory), Continued

can be issued. This consultation process will be for the presence of Red-Cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) as well as two other threatened and endangered plant species.

- f. Projected wetland impacts from this project may exceed 200 acres.
- g. The USEPA had a number of comments concerning the DEIS that were addressed by the Department of Transportation after release of the DEIS.
- h. The Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) corridor was selected by the Merger Team in May 2012.

3. **CURRENT STATUS:**

- a. Avoidance and minimization efforts within the LEDPA corridor will be explored in January 2013.
- b. The FEIS is anticipated to be released in the first quarter of 2013.