



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Wilmington District

## NCDOT/ SCDOT Carolina Bays Parkway, Horry County, SC and Brunswick County, NC (Regulatory)

- **Regulatory Action:** Reviewing NCDOT/SCDOT request for a wetland fill permit under the NEPA/EIS process associated with the extension of SC 31 (near SC 9) to US 17 (near Calabash).
- **Current Concerns:** The roadway project would require a large amount of wetland fill to construct. The project crosses State lines and involves multiple regulatory and resource agencies.



CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: NC 07

DATES: 01 APRIL 2022

### 1. PURPOSE:

To provide the status of the proposed Carolina Bays Parkway, Horry County, South Carolina and Brunswick County, North Carolina. (T.I.P. R-5876, Action ID SAW-2004-00823).

### 2. BACKGROUND:

- a. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) are pursuing the permit of a new highway extending SC 31 from SC 9 in Horry County, SC, across the North Carolina State line to US 17 in Brunswick County.
- b. The project is being reviewed within the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/404 Merger Process; a streamline process intended to merge the requirements of NEPA with the 404 b (1) guidelines of the Clean Water Act.
- c. The Corps started as lead federal agency for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process.
- d. Federal Highway funding was realized in August 2018 which has changed the lead Federal Agency from USACE to FHWA.

e. The Corps withdrew the Notice of Intent to prepare the EIS on November 30, 2018.

3. **CURRENT STATUS:**

a. Since the project is now being reinitiated after Executive Order 13807, the Corps will serve as a cooperating agency under the One Federal Decision guidelines. The Project will continue to be reviewed under the Merger Process with the Charleston District.

b. The Merger Team concurred with Concurrence Point 1 (Purpose and Need) in August 2019.

c. The Merger Team concurred with Concurrence Point 2 (Detailed Study Alternatives) in June 2020.

d. The Federal Highway Administration issued the Notice of Intent to prepare a Final EIS along with a permitting timetable in the Federal Register on October 7, 2021.

e. The preliminary jurisdictional determination was completed and revised in January 2022. Shortly after Concurrence Point 2A (hydraulics structures review/ bridging decision) was made in February 2022.

4. **NEXT STEPS:**

a. Concurrence Point 3 (decision on the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative, LEDPA concurrence point) is expected within the next several months or spring 2022.

b. The FHWA combined Record of Decision and Final EIS is anticipated in early 2023. The USACE is anticipating making a permit decision in Fall of 2023.