

408-SAW-2024-0030

PUBLIC NOTICE REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO MODIFY A U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS PROJECT UNDER SECTION 408

TITLE: North Carolina Department of Transportation, Cape Fear Memorial Bridge Replacement, Wilmington Harbor Federal Project, New Hanover County, North Carolina.

PUBLIC NOTICE COMMENT PERIOD:

Begins: January 31, 2025 Expires: March 3, 2025

Interested parties are hereby notified that a request has been received for Department of the Army Section 408 (Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899; 33 U.S.C. 408; hereinafter Section 408) approval to replace the existing Cape Fear Memorial Bridge with a fixed bridge within and over the Wilmington Harbor, which is a federal project subject to Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, 33 USC 408 (Section 408), as described below (see the proposed action section below and the attachments for detailed information about the proposed activity). Written comments are being solicited from anyone having an interest in the requested alteration. Comments received will become part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) administrative record and will be considered in determining whether to approve the request. Comments supporting, opposing, or identifying concerns that should be considered by the USACE in its decision process are welcome. Comments providing substantive information and/or a rationale for the commenter's position are the most helpful. Comments regarding the proposed work should reference the USACE public notice number (408-SAW-2024-0030) and must reach the USACE via email no later than March 3. 2025, to become part of the public record and be considered in the USACE's decision. Please send comments to the Wilmington District Section 408 Coordinator at: ronnie.d.smith@usace.army.mil.

REQUESTER: North Carolina Department of Transportation

LOCATION: The proposed action is located along the existing Cape Fear Memorial Bridge along US Highway 421, over the Cape Fear River and the Wilmington Harbor Federal Project, in the City of Wilmington, New Hanover County, North Carolina. (34.22785, -77.97134).

PROPOSED ACTION: The requester proposes to replace the existing movable bridge with a fixed bridge. The existing movable bridge has a horizontal navigation clearance of about 400 feet, a closed vertical navigation clearance of 65 feet, and a raised vertical navigation clearance of 135 feet. NCDOT is considering the following 2 alternatives for bridge replacement:

 Alternative B involves replacing the existing bridge with a fixed bridge with a vertical navigation clearance of 135 feet and a horizontal clearance of 450 feet. Alternative C involves the replacement of the existing bridge with a fixed bridge with a vertical navigation clearance of 100 feet (+/- 35') and a horizontal clearance of 450 feet. This alternative may involve the construction of a bridge with a vertical navigation clearance of 100 feet, 110 feet, 120 feet, or 130 feet.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY: This request will be reviewed according to the provisions of Section 408. A requester has the responsibility to acquire all other permissions or authorizations required by federal, state, and local laws or regulations. An approval under Section 408 does not grant any property rights or exclusive privileges, nor does it authorize any injury to the property or rights of others.

EVALUATION: The decision whether to grant the requested permission for federal project modification under Section 408 will be based on several factors and will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits which may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. Review of the request for modification will be reviewed by a USACE technical review team and will consider, but not necessarily be limited to, the following factors:

- 1. <u>Impair the Usefulness of the Project Determination</u>. The review team will determine if the proposed alteration would limit the ability of the project to function as authorized, or would compromise or change any authorized project's conditions, purposes, or outputs. The decision whether to approve a request for modification would be based on a determination of no impairments.
- 2. <u>Injurious to the Public Interest Determination</u>. Proposed alterations will be reviewed by the District to determine the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, on the public interest.

SUMMARY: It should be noted that materials submitted as part of Section 408 requests become part of the public record and will be available to the public under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Individuals may submit a written request to obtain materials under the FOIA or make an appointment to view the project file at the USACE Wilmington District's Office of Counsel.

Interested parties wishing to comment on the proposed action must do so in writing no later than **March 3**, **2025**. It is presumed that all parties viewing this notice will wish to respond; therefore, a lack of response will be interpreted as meaning there is no objection to the proposed action as described.

Ronnie Smith

Ronnie Smith Section 408 Coordinator Wilmington District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

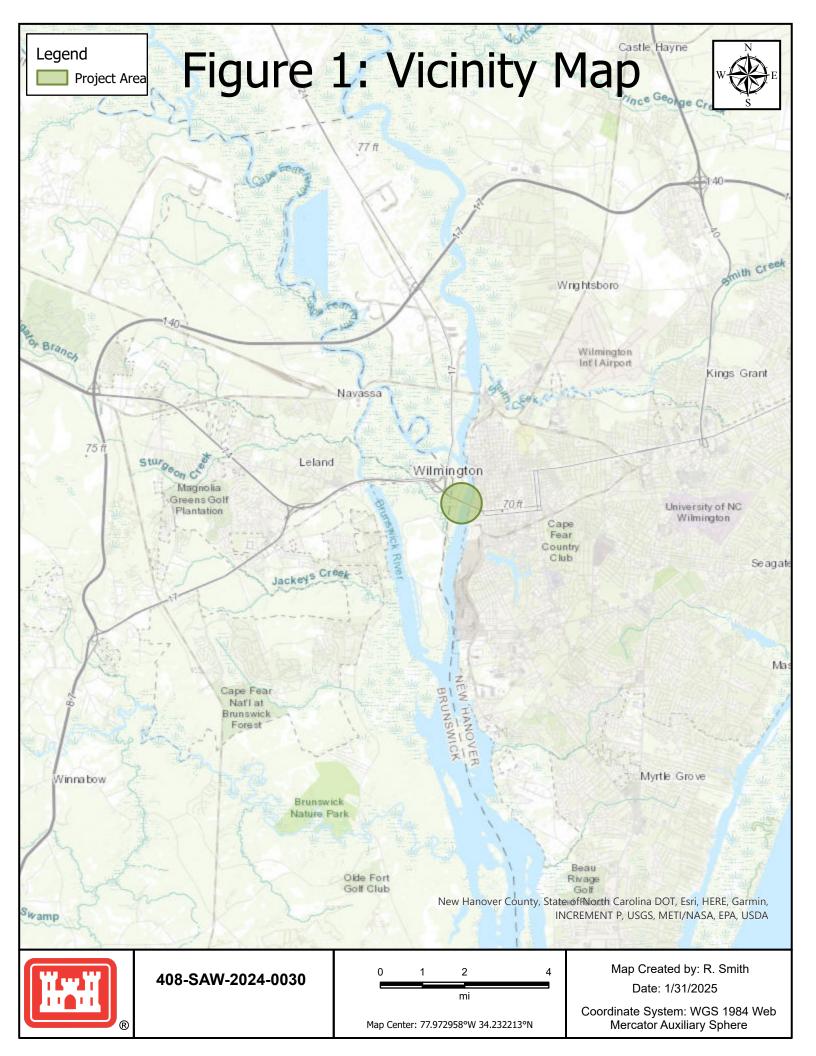


Figure 2: Federal Project Map

Figure 3: Profile View and Plan View Drawings

