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Public Notice

APPLICATION NO.:

MVK-2021-641

EVALUATOR:

Ms. Tarmiko Graham

PHONE NO.:

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E-MAIL: DATE: Tarmiko.V.Graham@usace.army.mil

March 23, 2022

EXPIRATION DATE: April 12, 2022

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District is considering an application for a Department of the Army permit for the work described herein. Comments should be forwarded to the Vicksburg District, Attention: CEMVK-RD, 4155 Clay Street, Vicksburg, Mississippi 39183-3435.

An application has also been submitted to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Environmental Services for a Water Quality Certification in accordance with La. R.S. 30.2074(A)(93), and Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (P.L. 95-217). Additional information is on file with the above office and may be inspected at any time between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Copies may be obtained upon payment of cost of copying. Comments concerning the application can be filed with the Office of Environmental Services within 20 days of this notice to the following address: Office of Environmental Services, Post Office Box 4313, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4313.

<u>Law Requiring a Permit:</u> Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344), which applies to discharges of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the United States.

Name of Applicant:

Ms. Tracy Purifoy Hunt Forest Products, LLC 401 Reynolds Drive Ruston, Louisiana 71270 Name of Agent:

Mr. Chad Turner Matrix New World Engineering 798 O'Neal Lane, Building F Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70816 <u>Location of Work</u>: Sections 13 and 24, Township 18 North, Range 8 West and Sections 18 and 19, Township 18 North, Range 7 West, Latitude 32.542174°; Longitude -93.134710°, within the Red Saline Drainage Basin (8-digit USGS HUC 11140209), Bienville Parish, Louisiana.

<u>Description of Work</u>: (See enclosed map and drawings.)

The following descriptions of the proposed project and associated impacts are based upon information provided by the applicant.

The applicant is applying for a Department of the Army permit to conduct regulated activities in jurisdictional wetlands for the construction of a sawmill.

The proposed project encompasses approximately 264.99 acres, located on the grounds of a former sawmill, remnants of the sawmill, including portions of concrete walls, metal buildings, and paved facility roads, remain at the site.

The new sawmill is planned for the production of softwood dimensional lumber, wood chips, wood shavings, and residuals from regionally-sourced southern yellow pine. Facilities within the sawmill would include a sawmill/planer building, two log cranes and dry storage stacks, a wet log yard and associated pond, four drying kilns, a rough dry shed, a finished lumber warehouse, a rail spur and loading yard for export of finished products, a new log truck access road, new administration buildings and new associated parking. It is estimated that the sawmill would produce 320 million board feet of lumber annually.

Impacts associated with the proposed plant would consist of 34.47 acres of wetlands, 4,494 linear feet of streams, and 4.04 acres of ponds. Impacts are summarized below:

Impact Type	Jurisdictional Feature	Acres	Linear Feet	Cut Quantity (cu. yds.)	Fill Quantity (cu. yds.)
Cut/Fill	Wetland - PFO	30.71	n/a	7,175	342,536
	Wetland - PSS	0.63	n/a	44	2,883
	Wetland - PEM	3.13	n/a	3,626	22,588
	Intermittent Stream	n/a	3,917	211	6,136
	Ephemeral Stream	n/a	452	n/a	422
Culvert	Intermittent Stream	n/a	125	n/a	49
Fill	Pond	4.04	n/a	n/a	176,103

The applicant has designed the proposed sawmill to minimize environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable. The heart of the sawmill would be constructed within the upland portions of the proposed site, where the former sawmill once stood. The footprints of those features that cannot be contained within the upland areas have been reduced to minimize impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and waters. Approximately 1,861 linear feet of filled streams would be realigned to maintain drainage, and the remainder of the impacts (125 linear feet) would be due to culverting.

Approximately 25.38 acres of wetlands, 6,433 linear feet of intermittent streams and 1,646 linear feet of ephemeral streams would remain avoided on the proposed site. The applicant proposes to purchase wetland and stream credits from an approved mitigation bank to offset unavoidable impacts.

Dominant vegetation includes loblolly pine, sweet-gum, Chinese privet, American beauty-berry, red maple, southern bayberry, pepper vine, bushy bluestem, broom-sedge, groundsel tree, small-spike false nettle, eastern narrow-leaf sedge, Frank's sedge, sharp-scale sedge, pignut hickory, hairy-fruit chervil, slender wood-oats, long-leaf wood-oats, bull thistle, Bermuda grass, Heller's rosette grass, Indian strawberry, dog-fennel, American beech, sticky-willy, American holly, yaupon, perennial rye grass, Japanese honeysuckle, long-leaf basket grass, eastern hop-hornbeam, cress-leaf groundsel, round-leaf groundsel, Virginia-creeper, dotted smartweed, Savannah-panic grass, pale-seed plantain, American sycamore, northern bracken fern, northern white oak, water oak, cherry-bark oak, willow oak, hairy buttercup, angle-stem beak sedge, saw-tooth blackberry, southern dewberry, black willow, lizard's tail, saw brier, horse brier, tall goldenrod, eastern poison ivy, Chinese tallow tree, white clover, American elm, hooded blue violet, and muscadine. Soils within the project areas are Guyton silt loam and Ouachita silt loam.

Upon reviewing this notice, you should write to this office to provide your opinion of the impacts this work will have on the natural and human environment and address any mitigation you believe is necessary to offset these impacts. Other comments are welcome, but the above information will further our review of the applicant's plan as proposed. Comments of a general nature are not as helpful as those specific to the impacts of the subject project.

<u>State Water Quality Permit</u>: The State Pollution Control Agency must certify that the described work will comply with the State's water quality standards and effluent limitations before a Corps permit is issued.

<u>Cultural Resources</u>: The Regulatory Archaeologist has reviewed the latest published version of the <u>National Register of Historic Places</u>, lists of properties determined eligible, and other sources of information. The following is current knowledge of the presence or absence of historic properties and the effects of the proposed undertaking upon these properties. A historic properties

investigation has been conducted within the permit area. No sites determined eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places are within the permit area or affected area.

Endangered Species: Based on the Information and Planning Consultation (IPAC) for Endangered Species in Louisiana Agreement dated January 14, 2020 between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it has been determined that the proposed activity would have no effect on the following species: Red-cockaded woodpecker. This project may affect the Northern long-eared bat (NLEB), but any resulting incidental take of the NLEB is not prohibited by the final 4(d) rule.

<u>Floodplain</u>: In accordance with 44 CFR Part 60 (Floodplain Management and Use), participating communities are required to review all proposed development to determine if a floodplain development permit is required. Floodplain administrators should review the proposed development described in this public notice and apprise this office of any flood plain development permit requirements. The project is not located within the 100-year floodplain.

Evaluation Factors: The decision whether or not to issue a permit will be based upon an evaluation of the probable impact of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision 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 expected adverse effects. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered; among these are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, historic values, fish and wildlife values, flood damage prevention, land use classification, navigation, recreation, water supply, water quality, energy needs, safety, food requirements and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Evaluation of the proposed activity will include application of the guidelines published by the Environmental Protection Agency under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act.

<u>Public Involvement</u>: The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties. These comments will be used to evaluate the impacts of this project. All comments will be considered and used to help determine whether to issue the permit, deny the permit, or issue the permit with conditions, and to help us determine the amount and type of mitigation necessary. This information will be used in our Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing.

Opportunity for a Public Hearing: Any person may make a written request for a public hearing to consider this permit application. This request must be submitted by the public notice expiration date and must clearly state why a hearing is necessary. Failure of any agency or individual to comment on this

notice will be interpreted to mean that there is no objection to the proposed work. Please bring this announcement to the attention of anyone you know who might be interested in this matter.

Notification of Final Permit Actions: Each month, the final permit actions from the preceding month are published on the Vicksburg District Regulatory web page. To access this information, you may follow the link from the Regulatory web page, http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx.

For **Jennifer G. Brown**

Team Lead, Permit and Evaluation Branch

Regulatory Division

Bryan Williamson



















