



State of Mississippi

TATE REEVES
Governor

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

CHRIS WELLS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

October 5, 2026

USACE – Mobile District
c/o Mr. Brian McPherson
100 Canal Street
Mobile, AL 36602-1901

Dear Mr. McPherson:

Re: Jackson County Beach and Dune Ecosystem
Restoration Project
Jackson County
COE No. N. FP26-MsCIP-01-08
WQC No. WQC2025097

Pursuant to Section 401 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U. S. C. 1251, 1341), the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) issues this Certification, after public notice and opportunity for public hearing, to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, an applicant for a Federal License or permit to conduct the following activity:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District: Project to reestablish lost or degraded habitat and provide expanded storm damage reduction along coastal Mississippi. The project will construct a beach berm on Front Beach and East Beach that extends approximately 190 and 170 ft. wide, respectively, and use approximately 300,000 cubic yards (cy) of sand. A dune field made up of 3 dune segments on Front Beach and 1 dune segment on East Beach will be constructed to form a 70 ft. wide, 2 ft. tall dune field, positioned 30-50 ft. from the existing seawall. The average water depth in the restoration area is approximately 1 ft. and sand placement will not occur beyond the -2 ft. NAVD88 contour line. The existing littoral zone habitat will be impacted with about 7 acres at Front Beach and 2 acres at East beach under mean high water (MHW) expected to be affected. Several abandoned piers will be removed from the project area. A marsh buggy will be used to access the old pilings where they will be cut off at

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the current substrate level and hauled off site. The existing drainage outfalls within the template will be modified to discharge out beyond fill placement and then covered with Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) Class 3 riprap stone to create groin structures perpendicular to the shoreline to reduce erosion of the beach sand. The stone will be sourced by the contractor from commercially available vendors nearby the project site and carried by truck over existing roadways. The sand material will be sourced from pre-approved locations within the Pascagoula River navigation channel, as outlined in the program's EIS (MSCIP 2009 EIS). The sand will be fine to medium-grained, compatible with existing beach sediments. Transportation will occur via barge through the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW), into Biloxi East Pass, and then pumped onto the beach through a pipeline. The dune fields will be planted with vegetation consisting of native species that are most widely used for dune restoration and are readily available from local nurseries and suppliers. Dune plant species being considered are sea oats (*Uniola paniculata*), bitter panic grass (*Panicum amarum*), little blue stem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), and marshhay cordgrass (*Spartina patens*). [COE No. N. FP26-MsCIP-01-08; WQC2025097].

MDEQ certifies that the above-described activity will be in compliance with the applicable provisions of Sections 301, 302, 303, 306, and 307 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and Section 49-17-29 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, if the applicant complies with the following conditions:

1. Appropriate best management practices (BMPs) shall be properly installed and maintained to prevent the movement of sediment off-site and into adjacent drainage areas. Special care shall be taken prior to and during construction to prevent the movement of sediment into adjacent avoided wetland areas. In the event of any BMP failure, corrective actions shall be taken immediately. (Statement F) (11 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 6, R. 1.1.1.B.)
2. Turbidity outside the limits of a 750-foot mixing zone shall not exceed the ambient turbidity by more than 50 Nephelometric Turbidity Units. (Statement A) (11 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 6, R.2.2.A.(3))
3. No sewage, oil, refuse, or other pollutants shall be discharged into the watercourse. (Statement A) (11 Miss. Admin. Code Pt. 6, R. 2.2.A.(3))

As part of the Scope of Review for Application Decisions, 11 Mississippi Administrative Code Part 6, Rule 1.3.4(B), the above conditions are necessary for MDEQ to ensure that appropriate measures will be taken to eliminate unreasonable degradation and irreparable harm to waters of the State, such that the activity will not meet the criteria for denial:

- (A) The proposed activity permanently alters the aquatic ecosystem such that water quality criteria are violated and/or it no longer supports its existing or classified uses. An example is the channelization of streams.
- (B) There is a feasible alternative to the activity which reduces adverse consequences on water quality and classified or existing uses of waters of the State.
- (C) The proposed activity adversely impacts waters containing State or federally recognized threatened or endangered species.
- (D) The proposed activity adversely impacts a special or unique aquatic habitat, such as National or State Wild and Scenic Rivers and/or State Outstanding Resource Waters.
- (E) The proposed activity in conjunction with other activities may result in adverse cumulative impacts.
- (F) Nonpoint source/storm water management practices necessary to protect water quality have not been proposed.
- (G) Denial of wastewater permits and/or approvals by the State with regard to the proposed activities.
- (H) The proposed activity results in significant environmental impacts which may adversely impact water quality.

MDEQ also certifies that there are no limitations under Section 302 nor standards under Sections 306 and 307 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act which are applicable to the applicant's above-described activity.

This certification is valid for the project as proposed. Any deviations without proper modifications and/or approvals may result in a violation of the 401 Water Quality Certification. If you have any questions, please contact Carrie Barefoot.

Sincerely,



Carrie Barefoot, P.E.
Chief, Land Disturbance Division

cc: Ryan B. Crane, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District
Willa Brantley, Department of Marine Resource
Jamie Becker, Environmental Protection Agency