

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

CORPS OF ENGINEERS, MOBILE DISTRICT P.O. BOX 2288 MOBILE, AL 36628-0001

CESAM RD-A
PUBLIC NOTICE NO. SAM-2018-00574-LET

August 5, 2020

JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS AND STATE OF ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

REQUEST TO DREDGE AND EXCAVATE WATERBOTTOMS AND SHORELINE AREAS, AND IMPACT WETLANDS IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PUBLIC ACCESS RECREATIONAL BOAT LAUNCH FACILITY AND FISHING PIER ON THE GULF INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY (GIWW), IN ORANGE BEACH, BALDWIN COUNTY, ALABAMA

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: This District has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403), and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Please communicate this information to interested parties.

APPLICANT: Baldwin County Commission

Attention: Mr. Joey Nunnally, P.E., County Engineer

P.O. Box 220

Silverhill, Alabama 36576

AGENT: Volkert, Inc.

Attention: Ms. Paige Felts 1680 West 2nd Street, Suite B Gulf Shores, Alabama 36542

LOCATION: The project is located on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, at 22840 Brown Lane; within Section 2, Township 9 South, Range 4 East; at Latitude 30.295527° North, Longitude -87.635399° West; in Orange Beach, Baldwin County, Alabama.

PROJECT PURPOSE: The proposed project will provide outdoor recreational opportunities to the public that include boating access to the GIWW as well as a fishing pier and walking trails.

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant proposes the recreational development of a 44.5-acre property on the north side of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) in Orange Beach. The proposed project includes a six-lane boat ramp with four 6-foot-wide access piers within an incised boat launch basin, with a 6-foot-wide courtesy dock constructed around the perimeter of the basin shoreline. Two 8-foot-wide breakwater dock structures would be constructed at the entrance to the basin, including a 123-linear-foot breakwater dock extending from the western bank of the basin, and a 109-linear-foot breakwater dock extending from the eastern bank. This configuration would allow for an 80-foot-wide

entrance to the boat launch basin area from the GIWW. The applicant also proposes to construct a 76-foot-long by 6-foot-wide L-shaped fishing pier, and 144-foot-long by 6-foot-wide boardwalk within a smaller adjacent basin located west of the proposed boat launch basin. A 6-foot-wide pile-supported boardwalk and a walking trail would connect the fishing pier to the neighboring boat launch basin. The proposed project would also include restroom facilities, a 32-vehicle parking area, and access roads.

Impacts would include permanent filling of 7,379 square feet (0.169 acre) of non-tidal forested wetland area for construction of the restroom facilities and parking area. Permanent wetland impacts would also include the excavation of 2,178 square feet (0.05 acre) of tidal littoral fringe wetlands for the expansion of an existing incised basin for the boat launch basin area. The existing basin would be expanded to 2.8 acres in size, with dredging of the basin area to a depth of -9 feet below mean high water (MHW). This expansion would require mechanical excavation of 4,025 cubic yards of material from upland shoreline areas and hydraulic dredging of approximately 12,962 cubic yards of material from waterbottoms. The dredged material would be dewatered in a 2-acre, bermed containment area constructed north of the boat launch basin, before being used as fill for the project. Return water from the containment area would discharge through a 12-inch outlet pipe, with riprap, hay bales, and silt fencing for filtration. Approximately 1,322 cubic yards of de-watered dredge material and 1,974 cubic yards of Class 2 riprap material will be placed below the plane of MHW to stabilize and protect the slopes of the boat launch basin shoreline.

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION: The applicant submitted a feasibility study which helped to determine the needs of the recreational area, including parking and boat ramp capacity. Construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be implemented to prevent silt-laden dredged material runoff from reentering the waterway. Due to environmental constraints caused by past uses of the property, orientation of the proposed project facilities was limited. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Mobile District, has not verified the adequacy of the applicant's avoidance and minimization efforts and an alternatives analysis had not been submitted at the time of this notice.

MITIGATION: For excavation impacts to approximately 2,200 square feet (0.05 acre) of tidal littoral fringe wetlands, the applicant proposes to provide for creation of an equal amount of in-kind wetland habitat onsite prior to excavation of the basin. The applicant also proposes to compensate for fill impacts to the 7,379 square feet (0.169 acre) of medium-quality forested wetlands through the debit of credits from the Baldwin County Mitigation Bank 1. The Mobile District has not verified the adequacy of the applicant's proposed mitigation plans at this time.

WATER QUALITY / COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT: The applicant has applied for certification from the State of Alabama in accordance with Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act and for Coastal Zone Management (CZM) consistency concurrence in accordance with the Alabama Coastal Area Management Program. Upon completion of the required advertising and public comment review, a determination relative to Water

Quality Certification and CZM consistency will be made by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM).

HISTORIC PROPERTIES: In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Appendix C of 33 CFR Part 325, the undertaking defined in this notice is being considered for the potential to affect cultural and historic properties within the permit area. In accordance with Appendix C of 33 CFR Part 325, the Mobile District has determined the permit area consists of the entire undertaking in waters of the United States as well as portions of the upland recreational development. The National Register of Historic Places will be consulted for properties listed in or eligible for the National Register, which are known to exist and would be affected by the proposed work. The Mobile District is seeking comment from the State Historic Preservation Officer regarding the existence, or the potential for existence, of significant cultural and historic properties within the permit area. The permit area described above will be reviewed by the District Archaeologist to provide a determination on the potential for existence of significant cultural and historic properties.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The proposed project would include dredging impacts to approximately 1.94 acre of un-vegetated estuarine substrate, potential shading impacts to 0.12 acre of tidal wetlands, and 0.05 acre of dredging impacts to tidal wetlands, which are all EFH complexes utilized by various life stages of multiple marine species. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have an adverse impact on EFH or federally managed fisheries due to the minor area of impact and proposed mitigation activities. Our final determination is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service and/or the U.S. Department of Interior, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

ENDANGERED SPECIES: Preliminary review of this application and the U.S. Department of the Interior's List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants indicate the proposed activity <u>may affect</u> the West Indian manatee (T), and will have <u>no effect</u> on the following listed endangered or threatened species with the potential to exist within the watershed of the permit area: Alabama beach mouse (E), Perdido Key beach mouse (E), piping plover (T), red knot (T), wood stork (T), eastern indigo snake (T), gopher tortoise (C), green sea turtle (T), Kemp's ridley sea turtle (E), and loggerhead sea turtle (T). There is no designated critical habitat within the project action area. The above determination is based on review of the Standard Local Operating Procedures for Endangered Species (SLOPES) programmatic agreement species effects determination keys for the aforementioned listed species and is being coordinated with the USFWS via this Public Notice.

COMMENTS: This public notice is being distributed to all known interested persons in order to assist in developing facts on which a decision by the USACE can be based. The Mobile District is soliciting comments from the public, federal, state and local agencies and officials; Indian tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the

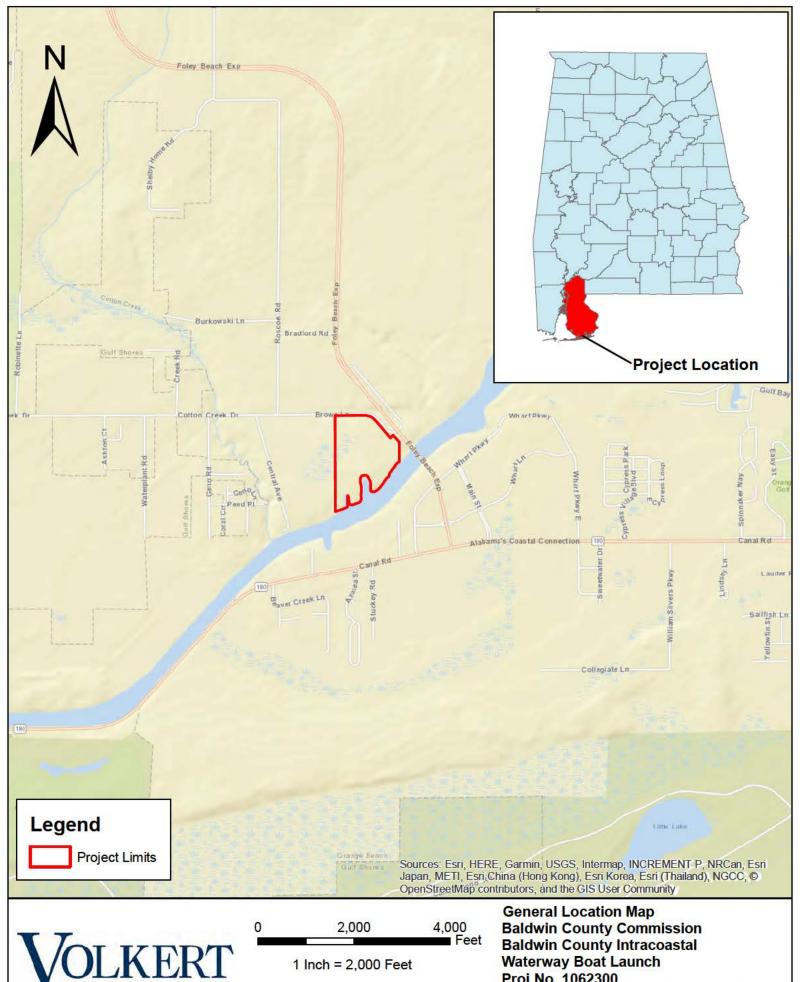
USACE to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed below. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. For accuracy and completeness of the record, all data in support of or in opposition to the proposed work should be submitted in writing, setting forth sufficient detail to furnish a clear understanding of the reasons for support or opposition.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Evaluation of the probable impacts involving deposits of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States will also include the application of guidelines established by the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Correspondence concerning this notice should refer to Public Notice Number SAM-2018-00574-LET, and should be directed to the project manager, Ms. Elizabeth A. Hamilton by e-mail at Elizabeth.A.Seavoy@usace.army.mil, or sent to the USACE, Mobile District, Regulatory Division, Attention: Ms. Elizabeth A. Hamilton, Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628-0001. Copies of all comments should be furnished to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management at coastal@adem.alabama.gov, or sent to: Alabama Department of Environmental Management, Mobile Branch / Coastal Section, 3664 Dauphin Street, Suite B, Mobile, Alabama 36608. All comments should be received no later than 30 days from the date of this Public Notice.

For additional information about our Regulatory Program, please visit our web site at www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx.

MOBILE DISTRICT U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

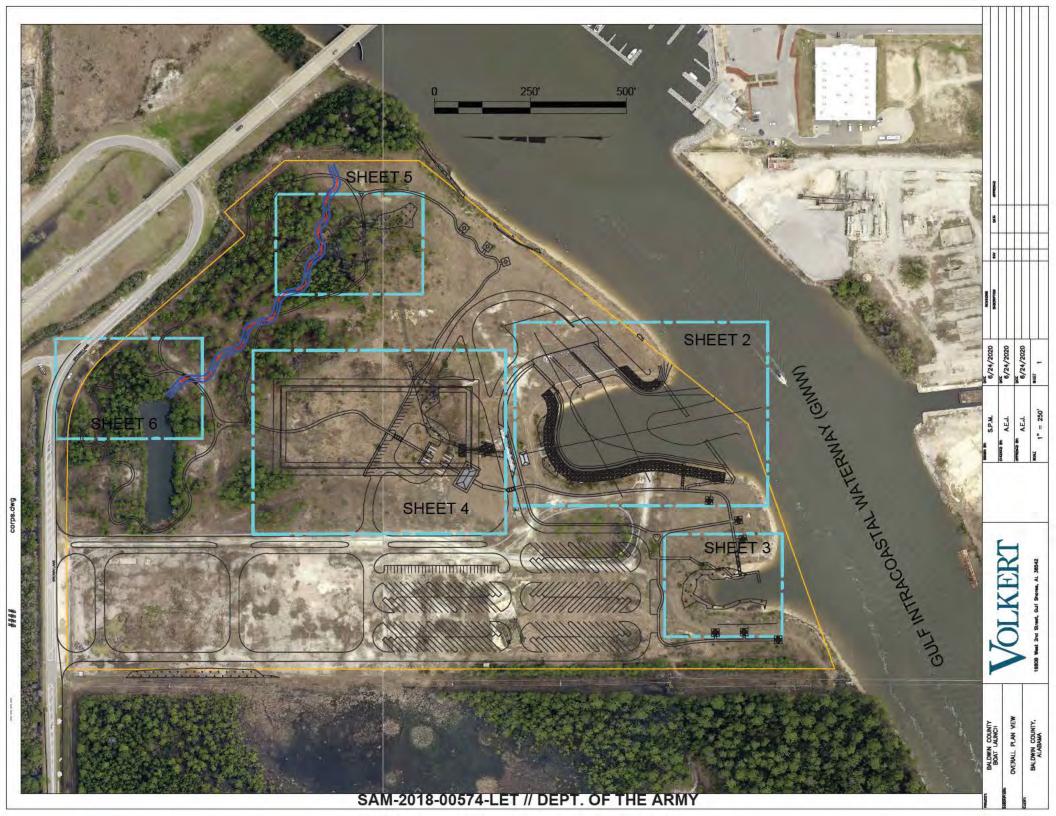


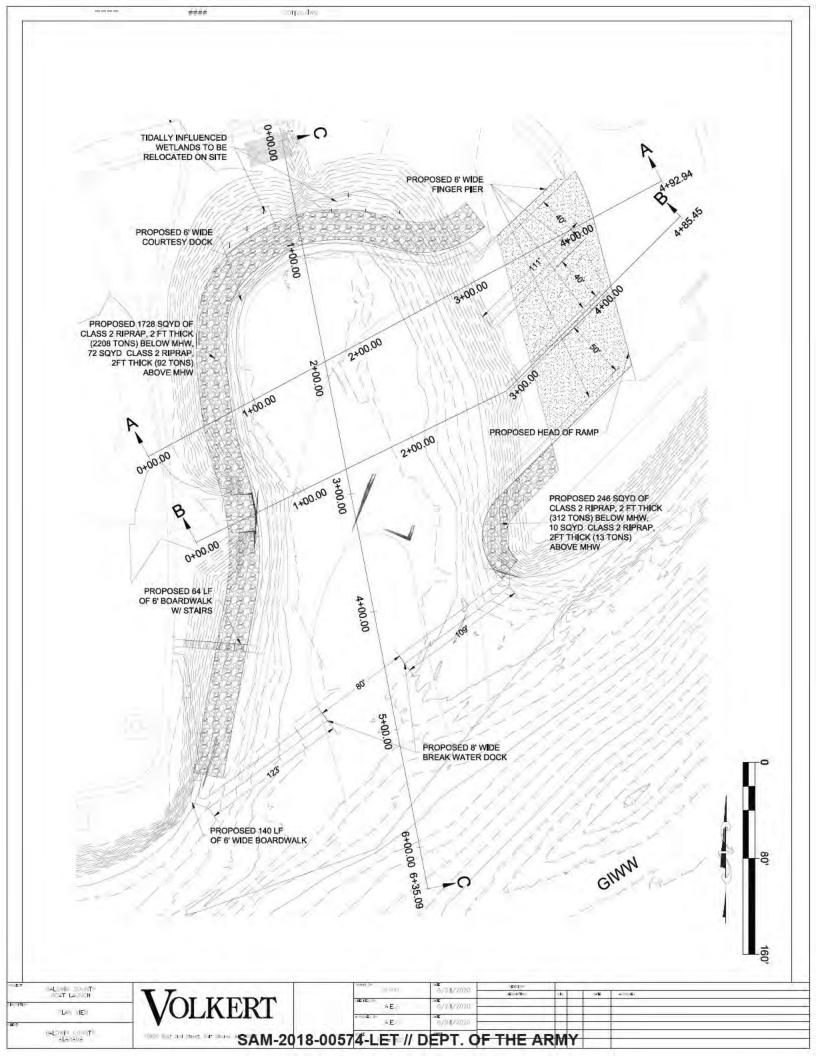
Note: This map is not intended for construction.

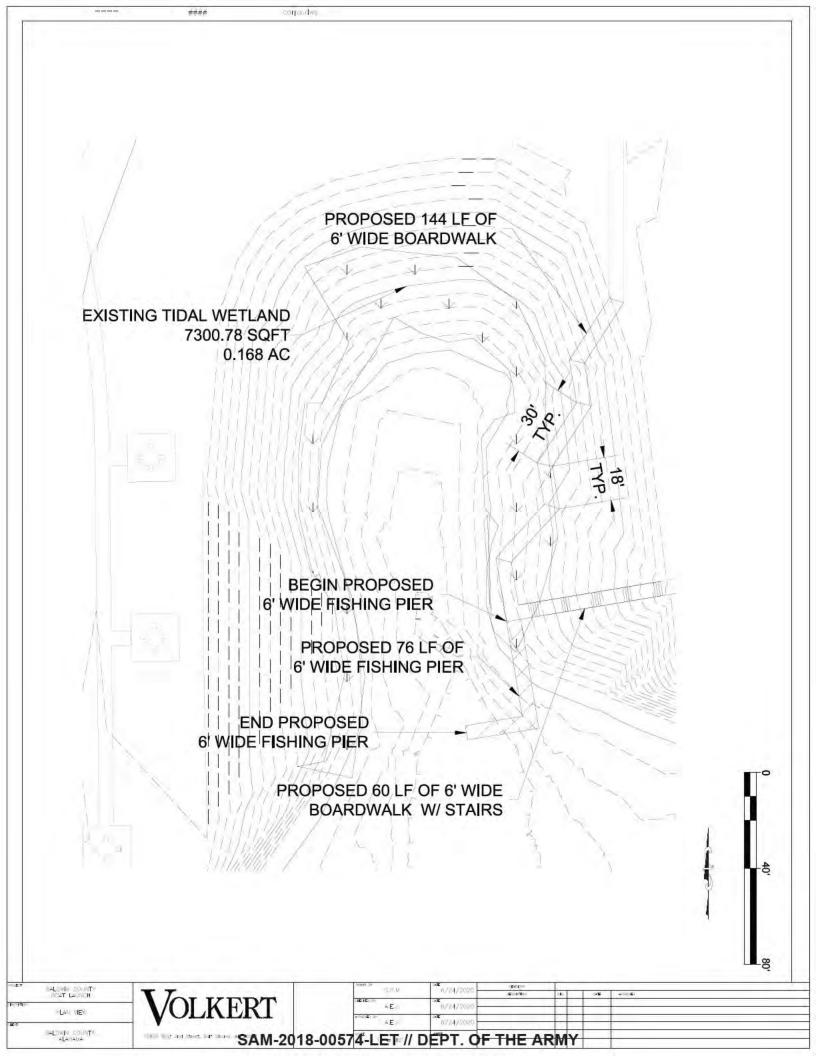
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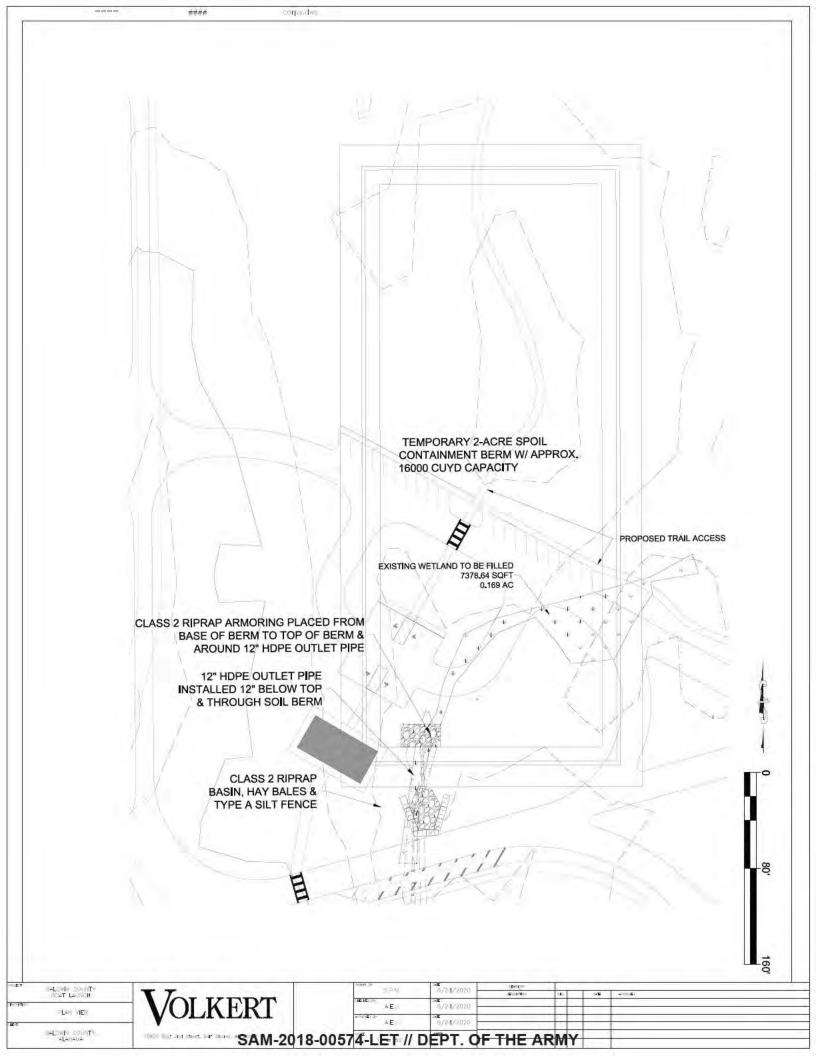
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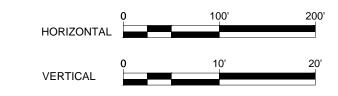


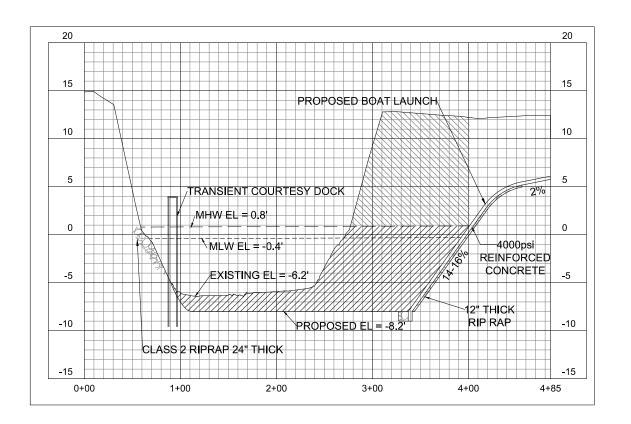












EXCAVATION ABOVE MHW

EXCAVATION BELOW MHW

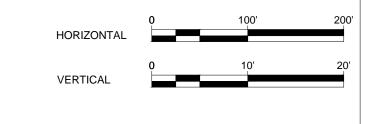
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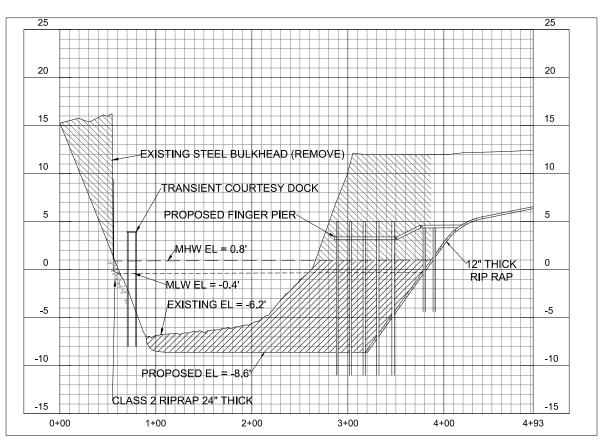
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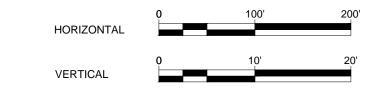
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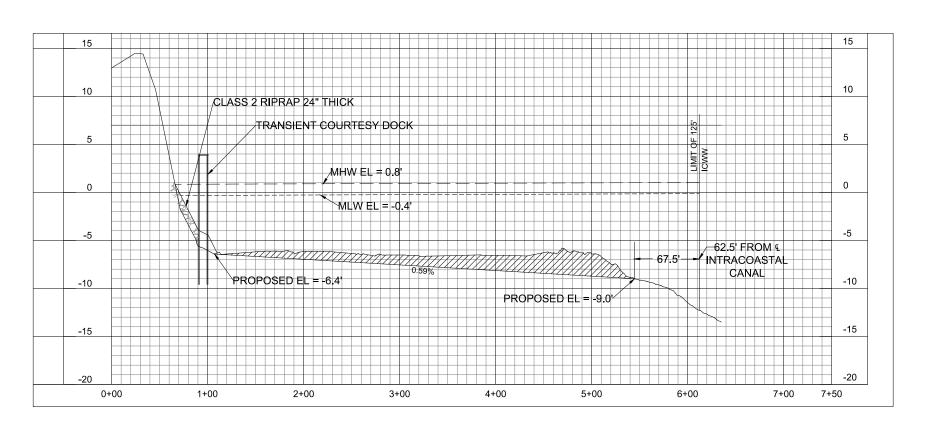
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EXCAVATION BELOW MHW



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CROSS SECTIONS
BALDWIN COUNTY,
ALABAMA

