



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, MOBILE DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 2288
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36628-0001

June 26, 2019

South Mississippi Branch
Regulatory Division

JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE SAM-2019-00215-APS

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
OFFICE OF POLLUTION CONTROL**

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

**PROPOSED WETLAND FILL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SWITCH PAD
AND ACCESS ROAD, ST. MARTIN, JACKSON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Mobile District, has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1344). Please communicate this information to interested parties.

APPLICANT: Mississippi Power Company
Attention: Mr. Patrick Chubb
Post Office Box 4079
Gulfport, Mississippi 39502-4079

LOCATION: All work is proposed to be conducted within an existing, cleared right of way of two high voltage aerial transmission lines, located north of Old Fort Bayou, south of Old Fort Bayou Road, and east of St. Martin High School. The southeast end of the access road meets Eglin Road at Latitude 30.43635° North, Longitude 88.78289° West. The northwest end of the access road terminates at the location of the new switch pad at Latitude 30.44341° North, Longitude 88.78905° West. The project is situated in Section 16, Township 7 South, Range 8 West, St. Martin, Jackson County, Mississippi. Water flows west from the project area to Bayou Talla which flows into Old Fort Bayou located south of the subject site.

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant proposes to fill a total of 1.62 acres of deforested wetland habitat that has been maintained for over 25 years as an herbaceous wetland. The project is located entirely within a 200-foot-wide aerial transmission line right of way. The proposed impacts would be associated with the construction of a new, 100-foot by 100-foot (1.38 acres) switch pad and the rehabilitation of a portion of the existing aerial transmission line's access road in St. Martin, Jackson County, Mississippi. Construction of the switch pad would involve the placement of a stable earthen base material covered with crushed gravel. This pad would support future switch equipment. A new switch would function to increase the reliability and operational flexibility of the existing power grid. Rehabilitation of the 3,000-foot-long by 20-foot-wide (0.23 acre) access road to the switch is necessary due to the severe degradation that has occurred as a result of off-road vehicle use on the roadway. Rehabilitation of the

access road would include the placement of a more stable earthen base topped with crushed gravel and the installation of seven 16-inch culverts to maintain hydrological connectivity between the two sides of the road. The improved access road would provide safer, more reliable maintenance and emergency vehicle access to the switch. Appropriate and effective Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be implemented and maintained during and after construction. Specifically, BMPs would include erosion control measures such as the utilization of silt fences to prevent inadvertent sedimentation in wetlands outside of the project area and the installation of riprap aprons at each culvert's discharge location to dissipate the energy associated with high-velocity stormwater flows. The installation of the riprap aprons would fill an additional 432 square feet (0.01 acre) of herbaceous wetland habitat, increasing the impact area total to 1.62 acres.

The entirety of the aerial transmission line right of way that is located within close proximity to the project area (14.33 acres) has been identified as highly disturbed, low quality, emergent wetland habitat, but the permit area for this project is only the footprint of the proposed fill area (1.62 acres). The USACE has not verified the accuracy of the wetland delineation or the reported quality of the wetland habitat.

The applicant has avoided and minimized impacts by locating the project in an area subject to frequent and recurring disturbances as well as utilizing an existing access road to reach the new structure. The applicant has also designed the project to avoid impacts to regulated areas as much as possible while still meeting the project purpose. The USACE has not verified the adequacy of the applicant's proposed avoidance and minimization measures.

Despite the highly disturbed nature of the access road, the area has retained the characteristics of a wetland; therefore, the applicant has proposed to provide compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts to wetlands resulting from the construction of the new switch pad and the rehabilitation of the access road by purchasing wetland mitigation credits at a 2:1 ratio from a USACE-approved mitigation bank. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has not verified the adequacy of the applicant's compensatory mitigation plan at this time.

The applicant has applied for state water quality (WQ) certification in accordance with Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act, and for coastal zone (CZ) consistency in accordance with the State Coastal Zone Management Program. Upon completion of the required advertising and public comment review, a determination relative to WQ certification and CZ consistency will be made by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Pollution Control, and the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

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. 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, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 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 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 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 above. 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.

Evaluation of the probable impacts involving deposits of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States will include the application of guidelines established by the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and Appendix C of 33 CFR 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 325, the USACE has determined that the permit area for this project consists of the 1.62-acre footprint of the switch pad and the access road, including the culvert riprap aprons. The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) has been consulted and no properties listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP are known to exist within the permit area nor are there any known eligible or listed properties affected by the proposed work. The applicant's agent has indicated that the permit area and the surrounding habitat are primarily wetlands and are not conducive to the discovery of potential cultural resources. Based upon the permit area's current and past history of disturbance, the absence of properties listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP, and the opinion of the agent that the area is not conducive to the presence of undiscovered cultural resources, the USACE has made a preliminary determination that there is no potential to affect cultural and historic resources within the permit area. However, we are seeking comment from the State Historic Preservation Officer, federally-recognized American Indian tribes, local historical societies, museums, universities, the National Park Service, and the general public regarding the existence or the potential for existence of significant cultural and historic properties which may be affected by the work. This action constitutes the full extent of cultural resources investigations unless comment to this notice is received documenting that significant sites or properties exist within the permit area that may be affected by this work, or that adequately documents that a potential exists for the presence of

significant sites or properties within the permit area.

A preliminary review of this application, the U.S. Department of the Interior List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants, and the South Mississippi Standard Local Operating Procedures for Endangered Species (SLOPES) Manual (2019 edition), indicates that the following federally-listed threatened or endangered species have the greatest potential to exist within the Old Fort Bayou Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC 031700090604), the HUC in which the project is located: West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), Mississippi sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis pulla*), piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*), wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), Alabama red-bellied turtle (*Pseudemys alabamensis*), black pinesnake (*Pituophis melanoleucus lodingi*), dusky gopher frog (*Rana sevosa*), gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*), loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), and Louisiana quillwort (*Isoetes louisianensis*). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has determined that the Endangered Species Act action area for this project consists of the 1.62-acre footprint of the switch pad and the access road, including the culvert riprap aprons. Federally-designated critical habitat for the dusky gopher frog lies within the project area's 12-digit HUC, but is located over a mile from the ESA action area. The USACE has made the preliminary determination that the proposed activities will have no effect on endangered or threatened species or federally-designated critical habitat. This notice serves as a request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service for information as to whether any Federally-listed species, Federally-designated critical habitat, or species proposed to be Federally-listed have been documented within the ESA action area or adequately documenting that a potential exists for the presence of these species or critical habitat within the ESA action area.

Correspondence concerning this notice should refer to Public Notice Number **SAM-2019-00215-APS**; be directed to the District Engineer, U.S. Army Engineer District, Mobile, RD-M, Attention: Mrs. Amiee P. Smith; and electronically submitted to cesam-regulatory@usace.army.mil or submitted by standard mail to Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628-0001. A copy of the correspondence should also be mailed to the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Pollution Control, Post Office Box 10385, Jackson, Mississippi 39289, and the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Bureau of Wetland Permitting, Attention: Ms. Willa Brantley, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Suite 101, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530. All comments must be received by USACE no later than **30 days** from the date of this Public Notice.

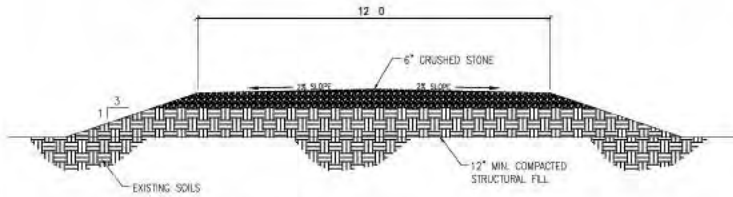
If you have any questions concerning this publication, please contact the project manager, Mrs. Amiee P. Smith, at (228) 523-4024, or via e-mail at Amiee.P.Smith@usace.army.mil. Please refer to the above Public Notice Number. For additional information about our Regulatory Program, please visit our web site at www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx. Please take a moment to complete our customer satisfaction survey while you're there. Your responses are appreciated and will allow us to improve our services.

MOBILE DISTRICT
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Attachments

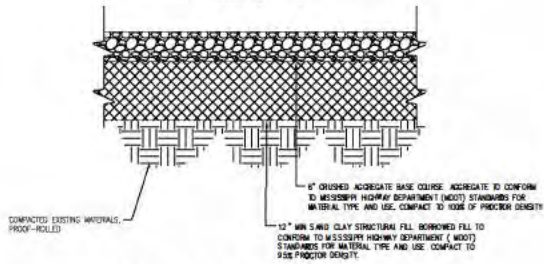


SITE LOCATION VICINTY MAP



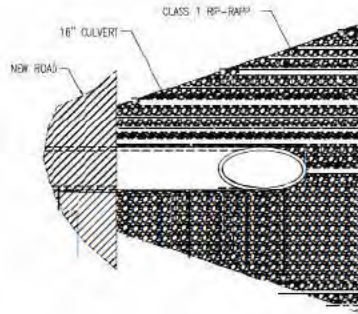
NEW ROADWAY SECTION

SCALE 1/2" = 1' 0"



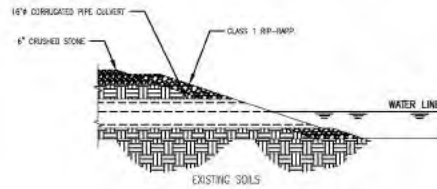
TYPICAL CRUSH STONE PAVING SECTION

NOTE: ALL MIX DESIGNS ARE FOR THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STANDARD SPECIFICATIONS FOR HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION - 2011 EDITION



NEW CULVERT SECTION

SCALE 1/2" = 1' 0"



ENLARGED NEW ROAD PLAN

SCALE 1" = 200' 0"

Vice Construction Co., Inc.
 Mississippi Power
 Tower Access Road

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY	CHK	APP

pei
 PRECISION ENGINEERING INC
 5858 Commercial Boulevard East
 Memphis, TN 38119
 Ph. 281.643.8844
 WWW.WWW.PRECISION-ENG.COM

DRAWN BY	M. STOKES
DESIGNED BY	M. SHIRLEY
APPROVED BY	M. SHIRLEY
SCALE	AS NOTED
PROJECT NO.	000000
FILE	000000
DATE	JAN 21, 2019

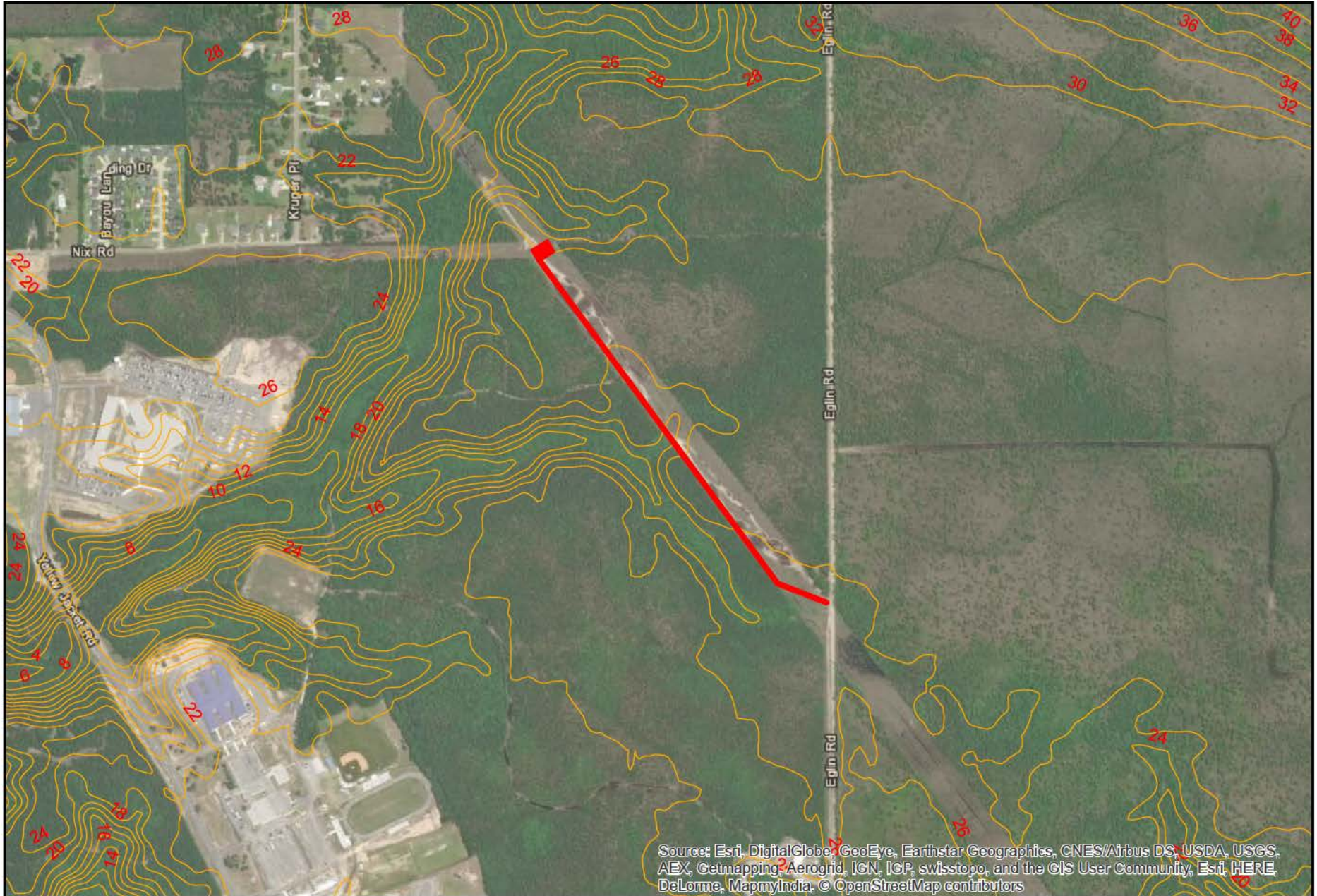
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SAM-2019-0215-APS
PUBLIC NOTICE

C1
 NEW ROADWAY

Mississippi Power - Fort Bayou Switch Access Improvement
Section 16 T7S R8W
Jackson County, Mississippi
USGS Quad: OCEAN SPRINGS (1:24K)

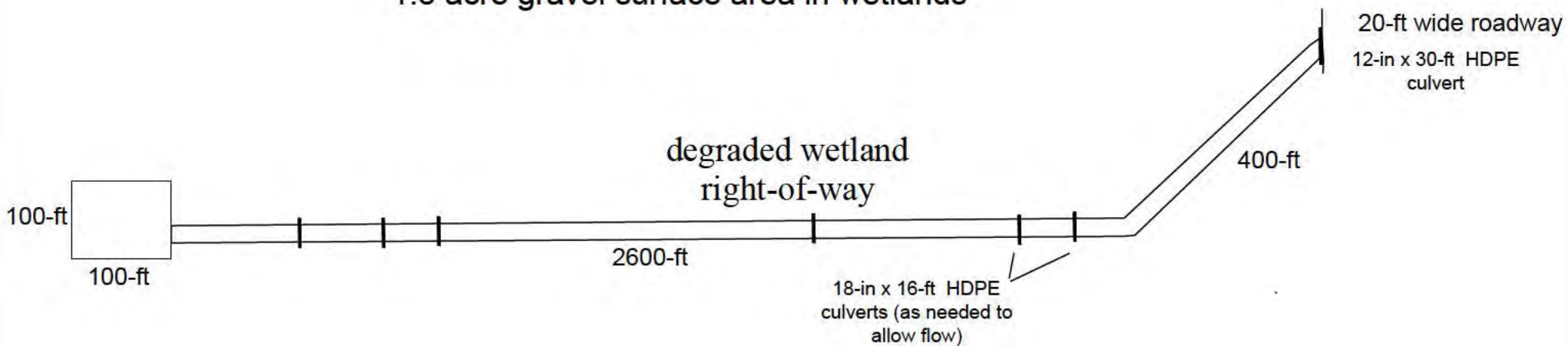


Mississippi Power - Fort Bayou Switch Access Improvement
Section 16 T7S R8W
Jackson County, Mississippi
Aerial with 2-ft contours



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community, Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors

Improved Access & Switch Pad
20-ft wide access road to work pad (100' x 100')
1.5 acre gravel surface area in wetlands



Prepared by MPC Environmental Affairs, 2/7/19

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
PUBLIC NOTICE FOR
SAM-2019-0215-APS

Mississippi Power - Fort Bayou Switch Access Improvement
Section 16 T7S R8W
Jackson County, Mississippi
Hydric Soils Classification Exhibit

