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4RG

August 1, 2000

V. Charles Bruton, Ph.D.
Assistant Branch Manager
Project Development and Environmental Analysis
NC Department of Transportation
1548 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1548

SUBJECT: Pea Island Mitigation Site, Dare County, State Project No. 6.051029, TIP No. R-3113WM, COE Action ID No. 199404858. CAMA Permit No. 40-95.

Dr. Bruton:

This letter is in response to letters dated September 15, 1999 and May 8, 2000 from the NC Department of Transportation (NC DOT) to the NC Division of Coastal Management (NC DCM) regarding the above referenced project.

The September 15th NC DOT letter requests a modification to the revised mitigation plan for the Pea Island mitigation site dated February 1995 for the proposed relocation of NC 12 from four miles south of Oregon Inlet to six miles south of Oregon Inlet in Dare County, TIP No. R-3113. The current monitoring plan for the site targets a vegetation success criteria of >50% of the plants living for at least 3 years. The monitoring methodology contained within the plan indicated that a determination of number of plants per acre would be made through the use of ten 15 feet square sample plots.

NC DCM hereby approves NC DOT's proposal that the monitoring plan for the Pea Island Mitigation Site be revised to state that vegetative success criteria will be >50% areal coverage of grasses and other herbaceous vegetative species for a period of at least three years. Vegetation will be monitored in the previously established ten 15-feet square plots. A determination of plants per acre is no longer required. Condition No. 8 of the CAMA Permit for this project requires that monitoring is conducted to attest evolution of wetland vegetation and hydrology. Because the CAMA Permit does not specifically identify the monitoring methodology, a CAMA permit modification is not required.

The May 8th NC DOT letter requests discontinuing monitoring of the Pea Island mitigation site. It appears, according to the information provided in your letter and in the 1999 annual monitoring report, that the vegetation and hydrologic success criteria have been met. We can, therefore, agree with your recommendation to discontinue monitoring at this site.

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We are pleased the site has exceeded the success criteria as specified in the revised mitigation plan dated February 1995: (1) vegetation coverage of >50% plants living for at least 3 years; and (2) hydrologic success criteria of soil saturation to within 12 inches of the surface for at least 12.5% of the growing season.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kelly Williams or me at (919) 733-2293.

Sincerely,

Cathy Brittingham

Cathy Brittingham
Transportation Project Coordinator

cc: Mike Bell, USACE
David Cox, NC WRC
John Hennessy, NC DWQ
Heather Montague, NC DOT
Beth Smyre, NC DOT
Kelly Williams, P.W.S., DCM