

818 WILMINGTON ISLAND SHORELINE STABILIZATION 2025

CMPA Permit Application

LaBarba Environmental Services

Tel (912) 215-1255
Fax N/A

139 Altama Connector, #161
Brunswick, GA 31525

sam@labarbaenvironmentalservices.com

Applicant Information

The applicant for the proposed project is Robert Ali, represented by LaBarba Environmental Services. The contact details are as follows:

Agent

LaBarba Environmental Services
Sam LaBarba
139 Altama Connector, #161
Brunswick, GA 31525
Email: sam@labarbaenvironmentalservices.com
Phone: (912) 215-1255

Applicant

Robert Ali
818 Wilmington Island Road
Savannah, GA 31410
Email: robertali331@yahoo.com
Phone: (912) 661-2108

Project Summary

The proposed project involves the construction of a bulkhead and riparian buffer restoration along a section of Wilmington River adjacent to Lots 53, 54, and 55 of the Walthour Subdivision in Savannah, Chatham County, GA. The project aims to stabilize the eroding shoreline, reduce sedimentation, and enhance ecological resilience. The restoration plan includes the installation of a bulkhead, rip-rap stabilization, and native marsh vegetation planting. The project aligns with Georgia's Coastal Marshlands Protection Act (CMPA) and other applicable federal and state permitting requirements.

Existing Conditions

The project site is a 4.3-acre waterfront parcel along the Wilmington River. The shoreline is unarmored and there is no existing marsh vegetation seaward of the CMPA jurisdiction line. The shoreline experienced a severe erosion event during Hurricane Helene, which caused approximately 15 feet of the shoreline to erode. The property was not eligible for an Emergency Order to repair the shoreline since it did not have an existing shoreline stabilization in place. The adjacent upland area is a mix of residential landscaping, including turf grass, trees, and other vegetation. The upstream and downstream properties both have existing bulkheads which are parallel with the CMPA jurisdiction line as delineated on the property, and approximately 15-feet seaward of the current scour line.

Proposed Structures

Bulkhead Installation & Shoreline Stabilization (Marshland Component)

The proposed project includes the installation of a 304.5 linear-foot bulkhead, constructed with timber piles, timber or vinyl sheets, and rip-rap toe stabilization. The design aims to minimize environmental impact while providing effective shoreline stabilization.

Tie Backs and Buffer Restoration (Upland Impacts)

The tie back system will consist of tie rods extended from the face of the bulkhead to a vertical deadman located approximately 12'-15' landward of the bulkhead. Running parallel to the bulkhead and adjacent to the vertical deadman pilings will be a horizontal deadman of timber or concrete to anchor the system. Due to the erosion experienced onsite, excavation will not be needed prior to tie back installation. The tie backs can be installed directly into the existing shoreline and will then be backfilled after installation. No earth fill will be placed beyond the CMPA jurisdiction line.

Impact Area Summary

- Total impact area: 6,899.86 SF
- Marshland area impacted: 1,522.5 SF (146.61 CY)
 - Bulkhead: 304.5 LF (304.5 SF) (56.39 CY)
 - Rip Rap: 304.5 LF (1,218 SF) (90.22 CY)
- Upland area impacted: 5,377.47 SF
 - Tie-Backs System: 367 SF
 - Backfill: 5,377.47 SF (1,195 CY)
 - Native Plantings: 5,377.47 SF

The project does not contain an upland component as defined in the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act.

Additional Permitting

25-Foot Marsh Buffer (Georgia DNR-EPD)

The proposed project is not subject to the 50-foot CMPA Marsh buffer; however, it is within the jurisdiction of the 25-foot marsh buffer regulated by the Georgia DNR-EPD. Chatham County is a Local Issuing Authority (LIA) responsible for determining if a buffer variance is required for the project. The Chatham County LIA has reviewed the project and determined that the project qualifies as buffer restoration, therefore a buffer variance will not be required. The buffer restoration plan can be found on Sheet 5 of the submitted permit exhibits and the approval from the Chatham County LIA is in the appendices.

401 Water Quality Certification (Georgia DNR-EPD)

The proposed project will utilize a Nationwide Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which has been granted a blanket Water Quality Certification for the activities. A copy of the Water Quality Certification can be found in the appendices.

Nationwide Permit 13 (USACE)

The proposed project is simultaneously being submitted to the USACE for verification as a Nationwide Permit 13: Bank Stabilization project. In the appendices is the Pre-Construction Notification and all of the additional documentation required for verification, as well as a Federal Consistency form.

Adjoining Landowners

Mark Kamaleson
816 Wilmington Island Road
Savannah, GA 31410

Michele Shellie Lee
830 Wilmington Island Road
Savannah, GA 31410

Landfill/Hazardous Waste Statement

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division Hazardous Site Inventory indicates that the project location does not contain any landfills or hazardous waste sites.

Historic/Cultural Resources

The National Register of Historic Places and GNAHRGIS indicate no historic sites on the property.

Soil and Erosion Control Statement

The proposed project will adhere to the soil and erosion control responsibilities as required for the proposed project.

Turbidity Statement

The proposed project will be performed in a manner to minimize turbidity in the stream. BMP's will be used throughout the duration of the project and inspections will be performed as required by law.

Needs Assessment

Shoreline erosion at the project site threatens the adjacent upland area, contributing to sedimentation and water quality issues. Without intervention, continued erosion could lead to:

- Loss of coastal habitat and shoreline retreat.
- Increased turbidity and sedimentation in Wilmington River.
- Reduction in storm resilience of the shoreline.

The proposed bulkhead and buffer restoration directly address these concerns, stabilizing the shoreline while enhancing ecological integrity.

Alternative Analysis

Several alternatives were evaluated to address shoreline erosion:

1. **No-Action Alternative:** Continued erosion would degrade water quality and threaten upland stability. **This is not viable.**
2. **Living Shoreline (Vegetation Only):** While seemingly environmentally beneficial, it may not provide sufficient stabilization in this location. The use of a living shoreline has not yet been successfully completed on the Wilmington River. This large river system may be too severe for adequate shoreline protection which could cause a failure and the installation of a replacement system. This would ultimately lead to additional unnecessary impacts. **Deemed insufficient.**

3. **Rip Rap Only:** While effective in some cases, the loss of the topsoil layer from the buffer area means that backfill must occur on the site. The rip rap will be less effective is an uncompacted shoreline behind it providing the base for which it sits on. **Deemed insufficient.**
4. **Bulkhead with Rip-Rap & Buffer Vegetation (Preferred Alternative):** This approach balances shoreline stabilization with ecological benefits. The bulkhead will ensure that the newly placed topsoil has a hard border to prevent additional erosion and sedimentation into the Wilmington River with a rip rap toe that will provide scout protection for the longevity of the structure. Combining the buffer restoration plan will offset some of the impacts from installing a hardened structure by incorporating native upland vegetation to restore the ecological buffer adjacent to the river. **Selected as the best solution.**

Public Interest Statement

A. Whether or not unreasonably harmful obstruction to or alteration of the natural flow of navigational water within the affected area will arise as a result of the proposal.

The proposed project will not cause unreasonably harmful obstruction to or alteration of the natural flow of navigational water. The bulkhead will be immediately adjacent to the CMPA line/high tide line and will not extend into the waterway past the mean low water, ensuring that navigation along Wilmington River remains unaffected.

B. Whether or not unreasonably harmful or increased erosion, shoaling of channels, or stagnant areas of water will be created.

The project mitigates erosion rather than exacerbating it. The bulkhead, combined with rip-rap toe stabilization and native vegetation on the landward side, will reduce shoreline erosion and sedimentation. These measures ensure that shoaling of channels or the formation of stagnant water areas will not occur.

C. Whether or not the granting of a permit and the completion of the applicant's proposal will unreasonably interfere with the conservation of fish, shrimp, oysters, crabs, clams, or other marine life, wildlife, or other resources, including but not limited to water and oxygen supply.

The proposed bulkhead will effectively stabilize the shoreline, preventing further erosion and sedimentation into the Wilmington River. While the bulkhead itself does not provide direct habitat benefits, it reduces sediment disruption, thereby maintaining water quality and aquatic ecosystem stability. The project follows best management practices to minimize environmental impact, ensuring that it does not interfere with fish, shrimp, oysters, crabs, clams, or other marine species.

Conclusion

The 818 Wilmington Island Shoreline Stabilization Project is an effective approach to shoreline stabilization and buffer habitat enhancement. It will prevent further erosion, improve water quality, and support coastal resilience while adhering to all state and federal regulations. Approval of this permit will enable long-term protection of the Wilmington River shoreline.

From: [Sam LaBarba](#)
To: [Osborne, Cheyenne](#)
Subject: RE: 818 Wilmington Island Bulkhead CMPA Application
Date: Monday, October 13, 2025 7:47:02 AM

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Cheyenne,

All work will be performed from the upland. Material will be stored in front of the house, on the Wilmington Island Road side, and brought back to the project area using a skid steer before installation by a mini excavator on the high ground.

Sincerely,

Sam LaBarba
Owner
P: (912) 215-1255
E: sam@labarbaenvironmentalservices.com
A: Brunswick, Georgia



From: Osborne, Cheyenne <cheyenne.osborne1@dnr.ga.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 10, 2025 4:26 PM
To: Sam LaBarba <sam@labarbaenvironmentalservices.com>
Subject: RE: 818 Wilmington Island Bulkhead CMPA Application

Sam,

I'll be ready to send the PN to review next week. Can you please confirm where and how the work will be performed?

Thank you,

Cheyenne Osborne
Coastal Permit Coordinator
[Coastal Resources Division](#)
Office: 912-264-7218 | Direct: 912-602-2788
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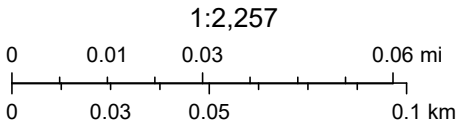
A division of the
GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

SAGIS Map Viewer



12/11/2024, 3:10:02 PM

 Property Boundaries (Parcels)



SAGIS



CHATHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING SAFETY AND REGULATORY SERVICES

1117 EISENHOWER DRIVE, SAVANNAH, GA 31406
P.O. Box 8161, Savannah, GA. 31412-8161
912 201 4300 – Fax 912 201 4301

26 - March 2025

Sam LaBarba
LaBarba Environmental Services
139 Altama Connector # 161
Brunswick, Ga. 31525

RE: 818 Wilmington Island Road

Dear Mr. LaBarba

The referenced improvements attached to this letter, including the proposed bulkhead and riparian buffer restoration adjacent to lots 53, 54 and 55 in the Walthour Subdivision at 818 Wilmington Island Road, do not represent a violation of the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance. This letter references the attached report dated 02/25/2025.

If there are questions, I can be reached at 912 201 4315.

Sincerely,

Marcus Lotson, Office of Zoning Administration
Assistant Director, Building Safety and Regulatory Services.

Attachments