

Jekyll Island Authority

Wildlife Viewing Platforms on “Oleander Big”

NARRATIVE:

Project Overview

In 2023, the Jekyll Island Authority received a Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP) grant to restore 114.5 acres of golf course into a wildlife and recreational corridor. As part of this restoration project, we aim to increase public opportunities to travel through this native habitat while learning about the island’s natural resources. Part of this plan includes offering landscape and wildlife viewing opportunities around and on the pond that are not possible on trail.

Specifically, we are proposing two trails that will segment off the pre-existing golf cart paths on Oleander that will lead to two wildlife viewing platforms for public viewing on the “Oleander Big” pond. Our proposed project entails constructing two wildlife viewing platforms and connecting them to pre-existing golf cart paths with permeable trails and boardwalks.

Project Goals and Design

The main objectives of this project are to enable visitors, residents, and staff of Jekyll Island to view and learn about nature and its processes. Two covered platforms are planned in order to offer different viewing vantage points, limit issues with capacity, and enable Jekyll Island staff to temporarily close one viewing platform for scheduled educational programs while still ensuring visitors have access to another in the same area.

- 1) The first proposed platform will be located on the northern side of the pond where an upland boardwalk where a 40 sq.ft. portion will enter the jurisdictional area and allow access to a 5ft. x 8ft. walkway (40 sq.ft.) that leads to a 12ft. x 16ft. (192 sq.ft.) covered viewing platform for a total approximate disturbance of 272 sq.ft. within jurisdiction. Approximately 125 linear feet of permeable path will exist in the marshland buffer, totaling approximately 620 sq.ft. of disturbance in the upland.
- 2) The second proposed platform will be located on the southern side of the pond where a 5ft. x 8ft. wooden walkway (32.1 sq.ft. of which is within CMPA jurisdiction) will provide access to a 12ft. x 16ft. (192 sq.ft.) covered viewing platform for a total approximate disturbance of 224.1 sq.ft. within jurisdiction. Approximately 85 linear feet of permeable path will exist in the marshland buffer, totaling approximately 432 sq.ft. of disturbance in the upland.

The two viewing platforms and associated walkways will impact approximately 496.1 sq.ft. of CMPA jurisdictional area total. The upland component of the project will total approximately 1,052 sq.ft. between both sites.

Environmental Considerations and Impact Assessment

We are using borate salt treated wood for platforms which is more environmentally friendly and lasts longer than traditional wood treatment methods. We are also using WearDeck decking on the platform and the raised path for its longevity to limit maintenance which would cause intermittent disturbance within the JD and buffer areas. To mitigate unnecessary disturbance within the JD, observation platform size is limited to approximately 20 people. Finally, we exited the 25’ buffer as directly as possible, deviating the path only to make exception for soil

stabilizing trees. All trails leading to platforms in the CMPA buffer will be 100% permeable limestone or gravel, enabling natural water flow.

Summary

Our proposed project will have relatively little impact on the marshland while increasing public appreciation for these natural resources through the experiential and educational opportunities they present. By constructing two platforms, we will increase capacity and viewing opportunities for all groups of stakeholders to the island. We are committed to executing this project responsibly, adhering to environmental regulations, and ensuring long-term sustainability of the affected pond ecosystems.

RELEVANT MEASUREMENTS AND CALCULATIONS:

- Distance into the Waterway - Up to 25'
- Distance to Navigable Channel – Jekyll Creek
 - 0.55 Mi straight line distance for northern platform
 - 0.58 Mi straight line distance for southern platform
- Depth of Waterway Within Project LOD at MLW: 2-6'
- Width of Waterway: Oleander Big Pond at Widest Point is approx. 1050' from MLW to MLW
- Nearest Structure Distance: No structures are within the Project Area

PROJECT DRAWINGS:

- Signed and Stamped JD Line (sent as attachment)
- Platform Design Specs (sent as attachment)
- Site Plans (sent as attachments and below)

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN and IMPERVIOUS COVERAGE:

The proposed project only includes a pervious trail for site development and public access. Stormwater will permeate this trail to prevent discharge of untreated stormwater from the site to the marsh. The upland component is 100% pervious gravel or limestone and will remain as such once the project has been completed. The project will implement standard BMP's during construction for sedimentation and control purposes to protect the adjacent marsh.

DEED, PLAT, OWNERSHIP, and ZONING:

Warranty Deed attached which clarifies ownership, lack of neighbors, and adherence to zoning regulations which are managed by the permit requesting entity for the proposed project (JIA).

ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS:

Alternative would be to only have trails around the pond, however this would not enable sufficient viewing of the pond or access to shaded, dry areas for educational presentations. We feel we can increase public education opportunities while minimizing disturbance to habitat.

LANDFILL HAZARDOUS WASTE STATEMENT:

The proposed project does not interact with any landfill or hazardous waste sites.

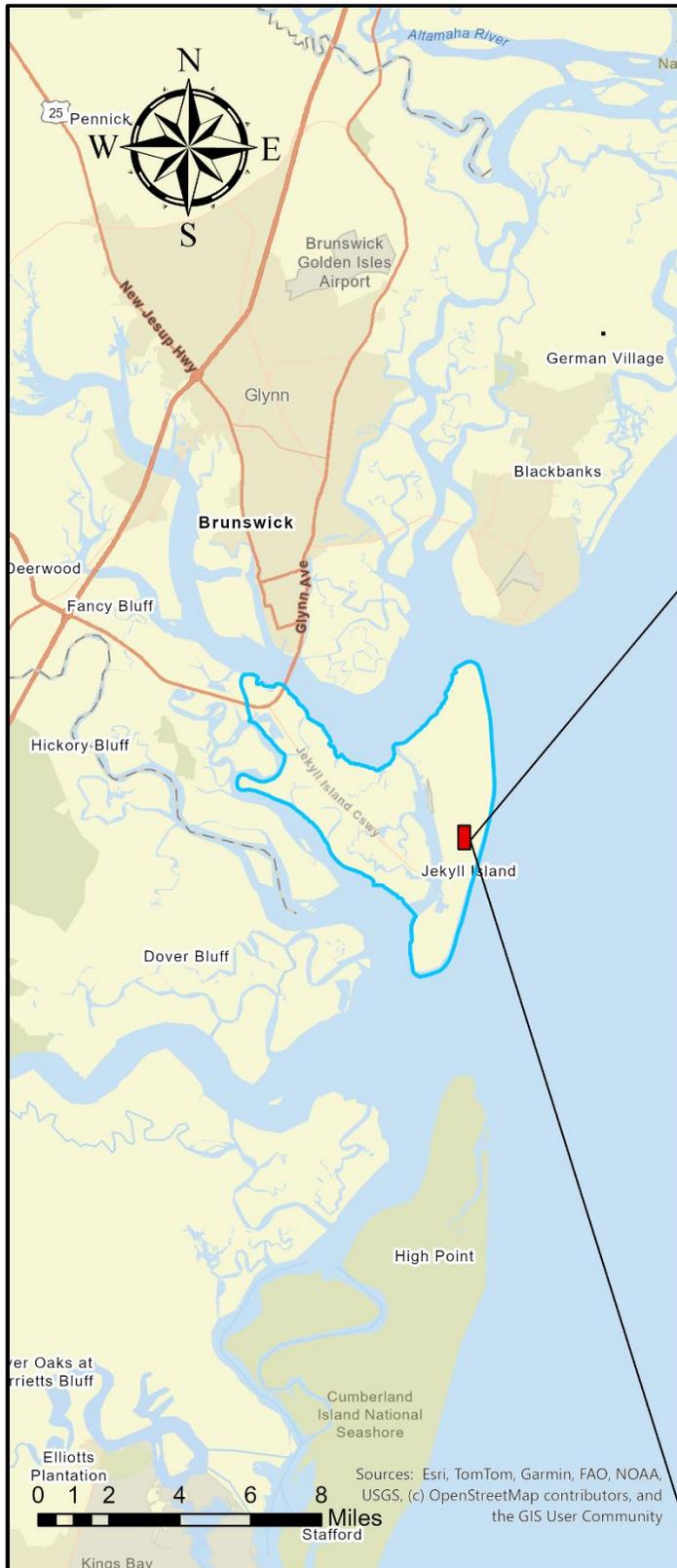
EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION:

The proposed project will comply with the applicable erosion and sedimentation control responsibilities and best management practices.

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT:

The proposed project will not negatively affect the natural flow of the navigable waterway, be unreasonably harmful by increasing erosion, or unreasonably interfere with the conservation of wildlife and marine life including the oxygen supply.

Site Location



Proposed Wildlife Viewing Platform Locations

Jekyll Island, Georgia

Northern Platform

81.4149864°W 31.0620135°N

Southern Platform

81.4135773°W 31.0588918°N

