1.0 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND:

Mr. David Crenshaw (owner/applicant) is requesting permit authorization for activities associated with the modification of a private single-family dock located at. The project area is located at 2801 River Drive within Chatham County, Georgia (32.032149°, -81.047600°). In 2006, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Coastal Marshlands Committee issued permit authorization for construction of the existing dock. A compliance certification was submitted to both agencies following completion of dock construction in February 2009.

2.0 PROJECT PURPOSE:

The purpose of the project is to modify an existing private single-family dock to better accommodate the applicant.

3.0 PROPOSED PROJECT:

The dock is currently comprised of a 5' x 650' (3250 ft^2) walkway, 20' x 20' (400 ft^2) covered fixed dock, a 9' x 9' x 13' (40 ft^2) triangular deck extension, a 10' x 25' (250 ft^2) covered boat hoist, 3' x 24' (72 ft^2) gangway, 8' x 20' (160 ft^2) floating dock, and a 7' x 12' (86 ft^2) jet dock. As depicted on the attached drawings, the applicant is proposing to replace the existing floating dock with a new 8' x 20' (160 ft^2) floating dock and install an additional 8' x 10' (80 ft^2) floating dock beneath the gangway. The proposed dock will extend 45' beyond MLW and 152' beyond MHW. The dock will be 11' from the northern property line, 92' from the southern property line, and 94' from the closest neighboring dock to the south.

3.1 Marshlands Component:

The marshlands component of the project is defined as the part of the project in an estuarine area or any structure on or over an estuarine area, including but not limited to marinas, community docks, bridges, piers and bulkheads requiring a permit under the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act. The marshlands component of the project is the walkway and dock structures located over and within coastal marshlands.

3.2 Upland Component:

The upland component of the project is defined as all those service areas, amenities and recreational areas located inland of the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act jurisdiction line, that serve or augment the functioning of the marshlands component of the project such as, but not limited to, dry stack boat storage, dock master shop, fuel storage and delivery facilities to serve the marshlands component of the project. The upland component consists of ~3,398 ft^2 upland access from River Drive to the existing dock walkway. No changes to the upland component are proposed.

3.3 Stormwater Management:

The proposed project does not include upland site development activities and development of a stormwater management plan is not required. The project will implement standard BMP's during the construction phase for sedimentation and erosion control purposes and to protect adjacent tidal waters and marsh.

3.4 GADNR-EPD 401 Water Quality Certification (WQC): The proposed project does not include any activities during construction or post construction (i.e. fill within Section 10 Waters) that require a WQC.

4.0 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS AND MINIMIZATION:

The proposed project includes modification of an existing private single-family dock. Avoidance and minimization measures were implemented during the design of the project to limit the size of the facility and encroachment of the facility into the Wilmington River.

5.0 ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT:

The proposed project includes modification of an existing private single-family dock within tidal waters. While the

project area contains essential fish habitat, due to the scope and minimal impacts associated with the maintenance activities, the project will not adversely affect essential fish habitat.

6.0 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES:

Coordination with US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) was conducted to assess potential impacts to federally protected species on the project site. The results of this consultation are attached to this document. In addition to the database query, a pedestrian survey was conducted on-site, and no federally listed species were observed. The following provides a brief description of each species listed as threatened or endangered.

Tricolored Bat (Perimyotis subflavus)

The tricolored bat is a small species of bat that is yellowish brown in color with pink forearms and black wings. Each individual hair is "tricolored", giving the species its name. They have rounded ears and a short and blunt tragus. Total length is 40-48 mm (1.75 in), the forearm length is 31-35 mm (1.25 in), and the weight is 3-6 g. The calcar is not keeled. The winter roosts are composed of caves, mines, cavelike tunnels, trees, or roadway culverts. Summer roosts are mainly in dead or live tree foliage, but may also be in caves, mines, rock crevices, bridges, and culverts. This species also typically roosts within riparian areas.

The project site does contain habitat which could support this species. For this reason, the project will have no effect on the tricolored bat.

West Indian Manatee (Trichechus manatus)

The West Indian manatee is a large aquatic mammal whose habitat consists of warm coastal and spring fed waters. It is listed as endangered under both its state and federal status. They are large, gray aquatic mammals with bodies that taper to a flat, paddle-shaped tail. They have two forelimbs, called flippers, with three to four nails on each flipper. Their head and face are wrinkled with whiskers on the snout. During winter months these mammals are primarily confined to the coastal waters of the southern half of Florida and the spring fed rivers of Florida and Georgia. During the summer months as the water temperature rises, the manatees' range expands as far north as Virginia and it is during these months that the "manatees" may occasionally utilize the estuaries of coastal Georgia. Critical habitat for this species has been identified as large portions of coastal Florida including the St. Mary's River.

While the project site contains habitat known to support the manatee, the proposed project will comply with the Savannah District Manatee Special Conditions; therefore, the proposed project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect this species.

Eastern Black Rail (Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. Jamaicensis)

The Eastern black rail is a small bird living in salt and freshwater marshes in portions of the United States, Central America, and South America. Males and females are similar in size and adults are generally pale to blackish-gray, with a small blackish bill and bright red eyes. Eastern black rail habitat can be tidally or non-tidally influenced, and range in salinity from salt to brackish to fresh. Tidal height and volume vary greatly between the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and therefore contribute to differences in salt marsh cover plants in the bird's habitat. Diet includes Insects, snails, seeds, etc. Loss of habitat is the main threat to this species however where habitat is projected numbers are likely stable.

The project area associated with the proposed dock modification consists of open water and does not contain salt marsh habitat required for the eastern black rail. Though, during the pedestrian survey, no species were found. Therefore, this project will have no effect on the eastern black rail.

Piping Plover (Charadrius melodus)

The piping plover is a small sand-colored, sparrow-sized shorebird that nests and feeds along coastal sand and gravel beaches in North America. It is listed as threatened for both its federal and state status. The adult has yellow-orange legs, a black band across the forehead from eye to eye, and a black ring around the neck. The piping plover forages and

nests on sandy beaches on the Atlantic Coast from South Carolina to the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, on sandy shores of the Great Lakes, and on alkaline wetlands and prairie river sandbars of the Northern Great Plains. Sparse clumps of grass or herbaceous vegetation are important habitat components. They feed on invertebrates found in the sand including insects, crustaceans, and mollusks.

The project area does not contain sandy beach habitat. Due to the lack of suitable habitat, the project will have no effect on this species.

Red Knot (Caldiris canutus rufa)

The red knot is a state and federally listed threatened species. This bird is a medium-sized shorebird about 23-25 cm (9-10 in) long and weighing about 135 g. In breeding, plumage it is easily distinguished from all other sandpipers seen in the state with a brick red to reddish-orange head, neck, breast, and abdomen and medium gray back with some reddish color mixed in. The black bill is straight with a relatively stout base that tapers to a relative fine tip. Legs are usually dark gray to black, but can be greenish in color in some adults in nonbreeding plumage as well as in some juvenile birds. Wings are medium to dark gray on top with some white at the base of the primary and secondary feathers that forms a thin white stripe from the shoulder to the tip. The undersides of the wings are light to medium gray with darker gray tips. The reddish-orange color on the head, neck, and upper breast is replaced by gray on adults in nonbreeding plumage. The reddish-orange of the lower breast and abdomen is replaced by white with dark gray barring on the flanks. A thin white stripe can be seen above the eye of adults. This stripe is broader and more defined in juvenile birds. Feathers on the backs of juveniles have a scaly pattern due to black and white edges that contrast with the gray feathers.

In the Western Hemisphere, the red knot breeds in the mid to high arctic tundra of Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. Most breeding habitats are near coastal areas, often on islands. Nest sites are generally on dry, sunny, and slightly elevated areas of tundra, frequently on open gravel ridges or slopes. During migration this species switches to coastal beaches usually at or near the mouth of bays, estuaries, or tidal inlets. Staging sites are associated with high wave-energy coastal areas. Wintering sites are generally intertidal habitats such as beaches with significant wave action or currents. Knots can be found on any Georgia barrier beach, but Little Tybee, Wassaw, St. Catherine's, Blackbeard, Sapelo, Little St. Simons, and Cumberland Islands, as well as St. Catherine's Island Bar are the locations most often used in the winter and spring, while Wolf Island, Little Egg Island Bar, and Little St. Simons Island at the mouth of the Altamaha River support the only known late summer and fall staging site on the east coast of the U.S.

The project area does not contain sandy beach habitat. Due to the lack of suitable habitat, the project will have no effect on this species.

Wood Stork (Mycteria americana)

The wood stork was listed endangered by the USFWS on 28 February 1984 (Federal Register 49 (4):7332-7335). It is listed as endangered under both its state and federal status. Wood storks use freshwater and estuarine wetlands as feeding, nesting, and roosting sites, and annual population fluctuations are closely related to the year-to-year differences in the quality and quantity of suitable habitat. The overall decline in wood stork numbers is attributed to the loss or degradation of essential wetland habitat primarily in southern Florida. The adult is a large bird 33-45 inches tall and 58-71 inches in wingspan. Males typically weigh 5.5-7.3 lbs; females weigh 4.4-6.2 lbs. They appear all white on the ground, with blackish-gray legs and pink feet. In flight, the trailing edge of the wings is black. The head is dark brown with a bald, black face, and the thick down curved bill is dusky yellow. Juvenile birds are a duller version of the adult, generally browner on the neck, and with a paler bill. They nest colonially with up to twenty-five nests in one tree. Breeding once a year, a female lays 3-5 eggs in the typical clutch. The eggs are incubated 27–32 days by both sexes.

The project area associated with the proposed dock modification consists of open water and does not contain salt marsh habitat required for the wood stork. Though, during the pedestrian survey, no species were found. Therefore, this project will have no effect on the wood stork.

Eastern Indigo Snake (Drymarchon corais couperi)
The Eastern indigo snake is a large nonpoisonous, stout bodied snake averaging six to seven feet in length. The snake is smooth scaled and uniform glossy blue-black throughout its body except for some reddish orange or cream color suffusion on its throat, cheeks and chin. This coloration varies with some individuals having distinct coloration and others with no coloration. In the extreme southern reaches of its range (South Florida), the snake is less restricted and inhabits flatwoods, tropical hammocks, dry glades and moist bogs. In this region of its range, overwintering sites include tree stumps and other underground dens. In the northern portion of its range, including south Alabama, the indigo snake requires deep sand ridges and is often associated with the gopher tortoise. The indigo snake is dependent upon the deep burrows dug by the gopher tortoise and uses them as a refuge from the extreme hot and cold temperatures. This restricted habitat is even more isolated by the snakes' preference for the interspersion of wet lowlands and cypress ponds.

Habitat required to support this species is not present within the project area and the proposed project will have no effect on the eastern indigo snake.

Green Sea Turtle (Chelonia mydas), Hawksbill Sea Turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata), Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle (Lepidochelys kempii), Leatherback Sea Turtle (Dermochelys coriacea), Loggerhead Sea Turtle (Caretta caretta)
These large marine turtles inhabit the offshore waters of the Atlantic and Caribbean. During nesting periods which fall within the summer months, these species leave the water to nest on sandy beaches and primary dunes of the Atlantic and Caribbean coasts. Turtle nests are not uncommon on the barrier islands of Georgia and have been located in the past.

The project area is located adjacent to and within the Wilmington River. Habitat required to support the sea turtle species is not present and the project will have no effect on any of the listed sea turtles.

Pondberry (Lindera melissifolia)
Pondberry is state and federally listed as endangered. Shrub up to 6 feet (2 meters) tall, forming dense colonies of green or brown stems with yellowish bases. Leaves 2 - 6 inches (5 - 16 cm) long, drooping, deciduous, alternate, widest at or below the middle, with a rounded base and sharply pointed tip; both surfaces of the leaf with conspicuous netted veins and short, soft hairs; leaves smell spicy (like sassafras) when crushed. Male and female flowers on separate plants, appearing before leaves, borne in clusters of 2 - 6 flowers, each with 6 pale yellow, petal-like tepals. Fruit about ½ inch (1 - 1.2 cm) long, bright red, oval to round, on a stout stalk about ½ inch (0.9 - 1.2 cm) long with a blunt tip. The stalk persists through the winter following fruiting. Pondberry occur in shallow depression ponds within wetlands, along margins of cypress ponds, and in forested floodplain areas in the southeastern United States.

The project area does not contain habitat required to support this species. For this reason the project will have no effect on Pondberry.

7.0 COMMERCIAL BAIT SHRIMP, OYSTER, AND CRABBING AREAS

The proposed project is not located in a designated bait shrimp zone according to Georgia Department of Natural Resources *Commercial and Recreational Bait Shrimp Zones, Coastal Georgia* map. The project area is not listed on the *Georgia Harvester Reported Crabbing Areas* list, and the project area is not located in designated commercial or recreational oyster harvest areas.

8.0 IMPAIRED WATERS

The subject waterway is not listed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 303(d) list for impaired water bodies.

9.0 SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

This additional information is provided for compliance with Coastal Marshlands Protection Act of 1970 information

requirements:

OCGA 12-5-286. Permits to fill, drain, etc., marshlands.
(b) Each application for such permit shall be, properly executed, filed with the department on forms as prescribed by the department, and shall include:

(1) The name and address of the applicant-
See attached application form

(2) A plan or drawing showing the applicant's proposal and the manner or method by which such proposal shall be accomplished. Such plan shall identify the coastal marshlands affected- Please refer to attached permit drawings.

(3) A plat of the area in which the proposed work will take place- See attached.

(4) A copy of the deed or other instrument under which the applicant claims title to the property or, if the applicant is not the owner, then a copy of the deed or other instrument under which the owner claims title together with written permission from the owner to carry out the project on his land. In lieu of a deed or other instrument referred to in this paragraph, the committee may accept some other reasonable evidence of ownership of the property in question or other lawful authority to make use of the property; The committee will not adjudicate title disputes concerning the property which is the subject of the application; provided, however, the committee may decline to process an application when submitted documents show conflicting deeds- See attached.

(5) A list of all adjoining landowners together with such owners' addresses, provided that if the names or addresses of adjoining landowners cannot be determined, the applicant shall file in lieu thereof a sworn affidavit that a diligent search, including, without limitation, a search of the records for the county tax assessor's office, has been made but that the applicant was not able to ascertain the names or addresses, as the case may be, of adjoining landowners- See attached.

(6) A letter from the local governing authority of the political subdivision in which the property is located, stating that the applicant's proposal is not in violation of any zoning law; A request has been submitted to the City of Thunderbolt and a copy of that request is included in this package. The response from Thunderbolt will be provided upon receipt.

(7) A non-refundable application fee to be set by the board in an amount necessary to defray the administrative cost of issuing such permit. Renewal fees shall be equal to application fees, which shall not exceed $1,000.00 for any one proposal and shall be paid to the department. The application fee is attached.

(8) A description from the applicant of alternative sites and why they are not feasible and a discussion of why the permit should be granted- Addressed above.

(9) A statement from the applicant that he has made inquiry to the appropriate authorities that the proposed project is not over a landfill or hazardous waste site and that the site is otherwise suitable for the proposed project- A review of the Hazardous Site Index for Chatham County, Georgia indicates that the subject property does not contain hazardous waste sites or landfills. A copy is attached.

(10) A copy of the water quality certification issued by the department if required for the proposed project- Not applicable.

(11) Certification by the applicant of adherence to soil and erosion control responsibilities if required for the proposed project- The project will conform to all building, land disturbing, and stormwater management requirements of the City of Thunderbolt.

(12) Such additional information as is required by the committee to properly evaluate the application- This application has been prepared with consideration for the interests of the general public of the State of Georgia as defined in OCGA 12-5-286(g):

OCGA 12-5-286. Permits to fill, drain, etc. marshlands.

(g) In passing upon the application for permit, the committee shall consider the public interest, which, for purposes of this part shall be deemed to be the following considerations:

(1) 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 does not include any additional structure seaward of the dock. Therefore, the proposed project will not alter natural flow of navigable waters or obstruct public navigation.

(2) Whether or not unreasonably harmful or increased erosion shoaling of channels, or stagnant areas of water will be created- The proposed structures will be supported on top of the water and do not require any dredging, grading, or shoreline alteration. Because no soil disturbance will occur, and because the proposed structures are on top of the water, the proposed project will not increase erosion, shoaling of channels, or create stagnant areas of water.

(3) 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, or wildlife, or other resources, including but not limited to water and oxygen supply- The proposed structures will continue to allow water to freely circulate around and beneath the floats, will not restrict movement of aquatic organisms, and will not remove any aquatic vegetation. Therefore, the proposed project will not interfere with the conservation of fish, shrimp, oysters, crabs, clams, or other marine life, wildlife, or other resources, nor affect water and oxygen supply.