

Environmental Permitting Information

(as of April 15, 2013)

U.S. Coast Guard Permit

The project will require a permit from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) for the construction of a new bridge over navigable waters of the United States. It is the USCG's policy to protect the freedom of navigation and the quality of the environment, meeting the "reasonable needs" both of navigation and land traffic. The project has been developed through extensive coordination with the USCG (since 2005). The U.S. Coast Guard reviewed and commented on the Environmental Assessment as a cooperating agency to the Federal Highway Administration. All conversations with the USCG have indicated that a fixed span bridge with 55 feet of vertical clearance would meet the reasonable needs of navigation as required by federal requirements.

Permitting Process

The Environmental Management Office (EMO) anticipates the permitting process for SC 41 Bridge over the Wando to follow the steps below. This is not an exhaustive list nor intended to be absolute but an anticipated process based on past permit experience. All applications will need to be coordinated through the SCDOT Environmental Management Office.

- I. The Jurisdictional Determination and Critical Area Line Plat have been obtained from US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and DHEC- Ocean and Coastal Resource Management Office (OCRM). SCDOT will provide the needed information to the winning bidder.
- II. The Contractor will be required to complete a USACE 404 Joint Permit Application for USACE Wetland and OCRM Critical Area Permits. The Joint Permit Application will be submitted to USACE and OCRM concurrently. Once the application is placed on public notice by the USACE, the DHEC 401 Water Quality Certification (401 Certification) and Coastal Zone Consistency Certification (CZC Certification) will be initiated.
- III. After the Joint Permit Application is submitted to the USACE, a USCG application should be prepared and submitted to the USCG per their application requirements. Proof of submittal of the 404 Permit, 401 Certification, and CZC Certification applications must be included in the USCG application.
- IV. After the public notice period has ended, the USACE will consolidate comments and provide them to the applicant requesting a response. Once comments and certification requirements are sufficiently answered or addressed, the 401 and CZC Certifications will be issued by DHEC and OCRM.
- V. When the 401 and CZC Certifications are issued, the USACE will then issue the Joint Permit (USACE and OCRM) for freshwater and critical area impacts.
- VI. A copy of the issued 404 Permit with accompanying 401 and CZC Certifications must be submitted to the USCG in order for the USCG to issue their permit.

The timeframe for permit issuance is expected to follow the typical time frame expected for a Joint Permit Application submitted to the USACE. With proper coordination, the USCG permit should be issued shortly after the USACE and OCRM Joint Permit. The SCDOT makes no guarantee on the process or time frame to obtain any of these permits or certifications and assumes no liability for additional documentation or coordination that may be required to obtain any of the aforementioned permits.