



Gulf Power®

March 19, 2020

Ms. Kimberly Pearce
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Northeast District
8800 Baymeadows Way West
Jacksonville, Florida 32256
via electronic submittal

Re: Responses to 2nd Request for Additional Information (RAI)
Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) Application 12-0378587-001-EI
North Florida Resiliency Connection Project

Dear Ms. Pearce:

Gulf Power Company (GPC) is pleased to submit the enclosed documents in response to your Department's December 20th, 2019 Request for Additional Information (RAI) regarding GPC's Environmental Resource Permit application for the North Florida Resiliency Connection.

The responses are provided in question and answer format, in the same sequence as was received in the RAI. Several of the written responses reference supplemental attachments, which are clearly identified in the table of contents included herein.

GPC looks forward to continue working with the Department and all affected agencies during the review process, and we welcome scheduling a meeting to review this submittal at your earliest convenience. If you have any questions regarding the attached responses, please contact Benny Luedike at (561) 904-3730 or Benny.Luedike@FPL.com or Jude Dawson at (352) 248-3336 or jdawson@ectinc.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Franck Leblanc'.

Franck Leblanc
Director, Environmental Services

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Response to Second Request for Additional Information (RAI)

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Response to Second Request for Additional Information (RAI) December 20, 2019

Environmental Resource Permitting Program
Site Name: North Florida Resiliency Connection Project
Site ID: 378587
DEP Application No.: 12-0378587-001-EI

The following is in response to the Request for Additional Information (RAI) requested by the Florida Department of Protection (FDEP) on December 20, 2019 related to Gulf Power Company's (GPC's) Environmental Resource Permit application for the North Florida Resiliency Connection (NFRC) project. The responses are provided in question/answer format in the same sequence as was received in the RAI.

Regulatory Review

- 1. The UMAM summary tables (Table 9) appear to have been rounded inappropriately when listing impacts. Additionally, Table 9 needs to be updated with the new impact changes addressed in the 1st RAI response. Please revise the impact tables, UMAM calculations, and project drawings to include proper rounding of the numbers. In addition, the UMAM worksheets provided for each wetland impact/conversion area no longer correspond with Table 9 after additional impact area changes have been made. The Department continues to conduct site inspections to review and confirm wetland boundaries and UMAM scoring. The wetlands located within the project boundary must be flagged for the Department to verify the delineation. Revisions to the calculations and/or mitigation proposal may be required, pending completion of the field work. [Section 10.3, AH, Vol.I]*

Response:

Agency site inspections have been ongoing since October 29, 2019, and to date, field inspections verifying flagged wetland boundaries have occurred in Jackson, Gadsden, Leon, Madison, Suwannee, and Columbia counties, where property access permissions from landowners have been obtained by GPC. Field inspections with agency staff are expected to continue throughout the application review process.

- a) Please revise Table 8 to declutter it by omitting the ERP application original columns.*

Response:

As requested, refer to the Revised Table 8 attached, which lists the updated wetland and waterbody impacts. Additionally, revised impact maps corresponding to Revised Table 8 are included as Revised Figure 5, Wetland Impacts Map, which is separated by county.

b) Please provide an updated Table 9 summarizing the final permanent impact acres, final UMAM delta, and final amount of functional loss, per table row. Then provide those column totals.

Response:

Refer to the Revised Table 9, which identifies each wetland and waterbody impact. Impact types are categorized by permanent forested wetland conversion, permanent fill in wetlands and waterbodies, and temporary construction in forested wetlands. Acreages, and UMAM calculation (pre, post, delta, and functional loss) are included for each impact. Additionally, total acreages of each impact type and total functional loss are summarized at the bottom of each table.

c) Please provide UMAM calculation worksheets for all new impact changes in the 1st RAI response.

Response:

Refer to RAI2 Attachment A-1, which includes UMAM calculation worksheets for each impact. Additionally, a UMAM summary table and representative UMAM sheets for each impact type, categorized by wetland type are included as RAI2 Attachment A-2.

d) Mitigation Bank Reservation will be required for each type of credits to be purchased after DEP concurrence of wetland delineations.

Response:

Overall, wetlands encompass 226.88 acres, 13.8 percent of the entire project footprint, and are distributed throughout the project extent. A variety of wetland types are found present, with most of the wetlands being comprised of mixed wetland hardwoods.

Impacts associated from this project would result in the permanent fill of 0.26 wetland acre associated with the installation of poles structures or guy anchors, plus temporary impacts to 7.46 acres of forested wetlands and the permanent conversion of 177.53 acres from forested wetlands to herbaceous. Impacts to non-forested wetlands would include 1.61 acres of temporary construction impacts plus 40.02 acres that would be maintained within the permanent easement, with no permanent loss of function. An additional impact of 0.00357 acre of permanent fill in surface waters would occur as the result of structure placement.

Once FDEP has concurred with wetland delineations, GPC would propose mitigation to offset these impacts through the purchase of credits from an approved mitigation bank. At this time, GPC estimates the credits needed to offset the functional loss to these wetlands and surface waters to be approximately 24.09. Please refer to the revised Mitigation Plan provided as RAI2 Attachment B-1 (Revised Attachment K).

Pursuant to FS 373.4136(6)d and s. 311.09(1), this project meets the definition of a linear project and is eligible to use mitigation credits even for portions of the project that may be outside a mitigation bank's approved service area. To more closely match the intent of mitigation, GPC has reviewed the basins and has proposed to purchase credits from the closest available bank to those basins that are impacted. Given the small amount of

permanent impacts to wetlands in each basin and the existing or reasonably foreseeable activities that would result in similar impacts, there will be no unacceptable cumulative impacts associated with the construction and operation of this project.

RAI2 Attachment B-2 includes two mitigation bank reservation agreements, including one from St. Marks Mitigation Bank, which reserves 11.5 forested wetland mitigation credits, and one from San Pedro Mitigation Bank, which reserves 13.5 forested wetland mitigation credits.

e) Response to question 1 of the 1st RAI denotes two conservation easement that will have to be modified prior to impacting those sites. Please address impacts to both conservation easements in Gadsden County, 20-0198475-001-DF Potter Family Partnership and 20-0200305-001-DF Hammock Creek Commerce Center.

Response:

In emails submitted to FDEP on February 14th, March 10th, and March 11th, GPC has provided additional details for each conservation easement (CE).

Specific to the CE related to Potter Family Partnership (Permit No. 20-019475-001), GPC has concluded that this conservation easement will not be impacted by the proposed NFRC project.

Specific to the CE related to Hammock Creek Commerce Center (Permit No. 20-0200305-001), GPC provided maps, a kmz file with georeferenced photos, and surveyed legal descriptions of the areas that GPC is requesting to be released from the conservation easement. While there are no transmission structures to be installed within the wetlands in the conservation easement, GPC proposes to permanently convert 0.734 acres of forested wetlands to herbaceous wetlands within the conservation easement. Once converted, these wetlands will be permanently maintained so that trees that have an expected mature height of 14-feet or taller will not establish. Additionally, 0.252 acres of uplands within the conservation easement will be impacted by the NFRC project for a total affected area to the conservation easement of 0.986 acres. Please find the RAI2 Attachment C-1, Revised St Joe Conservation Easement Exhibit.

Please refer to Revised Table 9, which identifies the UMAM score and calculated functional loss to the wetlands proposed to be released from conservation easement. In summary, the preconstruction UMAM score of these wetlands (identified as W-GOL-312) is 0.67, and the functional loss to these wetlands resulting from the NFRC project, would normally be mitigated by purchasing 0.16 mitigation credits. GPC proposes to purchase two-times the required mitigation credits (0.32 total credits) from St. Marks Mitigation Bank in order to offset impacts to these wetlands that were placed in conservation easement.

2. Response to question 2 of the 1st RAI states that “GPC is continuing to seek permission to assess properties from landowners” and only about 30% of the required easements have been acquired. Please provide documentation of Real Property Interest in all project areas. If RPI for project construction is not yet acquired, the Department will require permission from property owners prior to conducting field work. [Section 4.2.3(d), AH, Vol I]

Response:

Pursuant to the provisions in the Department’s Environmental Resource Permit Applicant’s Handbook Volume 1, Section 4.2.3(d)3., GPC has real property interest in all project areas. GPC is currently working to acquire land rights over all project areas. To this effort, GPC has compiled the ownership and easement documents recorded to date by county and has uploaded them onto your department’s FTP site on March 1, 2020. Additional submittals of acquisition documentation for all remaining areas will be provided prior to construction.

3. Attachment E of the 1st RAI response denotes an outline of construction details for all waterbody crossings. Please provide construction details and potential impacts of all wetland and waterbody crossings, including those that are temporary in nature. These details and impacts should include, but are not limited to: navigation, public health/safety, restoration, and water quality impacts. [Section 10.2, AH, Vol.I]

Response:

Please see attached construction details provided as Attachment D-1, for the updated Wetland and Waterbody Access and Construction Criteria Manual (WWACCM).

Section 1 of the WWACCM describes the project and the purpose of the Manual.

Section 2 of the Manual details the supervision and inspection responsibilities of the project team and Environmental Inspector.

Section 3 provides construction information, including sequencing, restoration/revegetation procedures, and access limitations.

Section 4 of the WWACCM includes information related to constructing the temporary staging areas and repeater station.

Section 5 of the Manual describes in detail, construction activities at waterbody locations. More specifically, Section 5.2 provides details regarding how the project will affect navigation. Further Section 5.3 provides information as to how public health / safety will be protected during construction and operation of the transmission line over waterbodies. Additionally, Section 5.4 addresses how water quality will be protected during construction. Finally, Section 5.5 provides information on restoration efforts to be implemented at waterbody locations within the project area.

Section 6 of the WWACCM describes in detail, construction activities at wetland locations. More specifically, construction and access details within wetlands is described in Section 6.2. Further, Section 6.3 provides information as to how public health / safety will be protected during construction and operation of the transmission line. Additionally,

protection of water quality in wetlands and the use of various BMPs to be implemented during construction is described in Section 6.4. Finally, Section 6.5 provides information pertaining to clearing activities within wetlands and Section 6.6 explains restoration efforts to be implemented within wetlands.

Stormwater Review

4. Please provide calculations of required treatment volume for each Staging Area based on design criteria of specific Water Management District. According to Site Detail table in all staging area maps, all treatment volumes were calculated based on first 1-inch of runoff, which did not reflect required treatment volume (although some of them may be greater than required treatment volumes). Refer to Section 4.3 of Suwannee River Water Management District and 5.2 of Northwest Water Management District Volume II Applicant's Handbook.

Response:

Refer to RAI2 Attachment E-1 for the revised staging area information, which has been uploaded to the Department's FTP. For ease of review, each staging area has been compiled separately, and the required treatment volume calculations have been bookmarked within each file.

5. Some Staging Areas have multiple drainage basins based on site topography. Geotechnical exploration was performed with at least two soil borings on Staging Areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8. However, only one treatment volume recovery analysis using POND model was performed for each Staging Area. The model input values seem inconsistent with recommendations provided by the Geotechnical Report. Please explain in each Staging Area report the basis for each value including stage-area data as well. It is recommended to perform the recovery analysis and soil boring for each drainage basin. Refer to Part I of Section E of ERP Application.

Response:

As requested, the attached Staging Area exhibit (RAI2 Attachment E-1) has been revised to include additional borings and perc tests per basin. Additionally, for Staging Areas where there are multiple drainage sub-basins, stormwater and recovery calculations have been performed for each sub-basin. These calculations are summarized in the included narrative and the calculations provided as part of RAI2 Attachment E-31

6. Based on POND model Summary of Results of Staging Area 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8, the infiltration volume within 72 hours is less than the treatment volume listed in the Site Detail table in each staging area. Please verify. If soil underneath the #57 aggregate will not be compacted, it may have the function of infiltration that can be accounted as recovery. Please demonstrate that required treatment volume for each drainage basin will be recovered within 72 hours. Refer to Section 4.4 of Suwannee River Water Management District and 5.3 of Northwest Water Management District Volume II Applicant's Handbook.

Response:

The soil underneath the #57 aggregate (except the perimeter road) will not be compacted. We have incorporated this additional area as infiltration for recovery within 72 hours. Recovery calculations, using PONDS software, for each sub-basin within each Staging Area has been performed and the calculations are included in RAI2 Attachment E-1.

7. Storm events for water quantity analysis were 10-year, 25-year, and 100-year frequency and 24-hour duration. However, Suwannee River Water Management District requires the applicant to analyze the 100-year frequency of the 1-, 2-, 4-, 8-, and 24-hour, with 3-, 7-, and 10-day durations for all stormwater systems. Please provide additional simulations. Refer to Section 3.2 of Suwannee River Water Management District Volume II Applicant's Handbook.

Response:

The water quality analysis has been updated to include the 100-year frequency of the 1-, 2-, 4-, 8-, and 24-hour, with 3-, 7-, and 10-day durations. In most instances, the 100-year, 10-day storm drove the design. The calculations for each scenario are included in RAI2 Attachment E-1.

8. By comparing peak elevations resulted from POND model with proposed top of berms shown in cross sections, it is noticed that NE Pond in Staging Area 2 and East Pond in Staging Area 5 will overtop the berms. In addition, SE Pond in Staging Area 2 and West Pond in Staging Area 3 will have less than 1-foot of freeboard. Please verify and assure 1-foot freeboard. Refer to Section 5.1 of Suwannee River Water Management District Volume II Applicant's Handbook.

Response:

Each pond / berm has been re-evaluated and a minimum of 1 foot of freeboard has been provided. The cross-sections have been updated to reflect the requirements of the Applicant's Handbook and the revised stormwater calculations. Tables have been included on the Staging Area plans and within the narrative that depict the peak storage elevation, top of bank, and discharge structures, as well as the basin design volumes. Refer to RAI2 Attachment E-1.

9. Cross Sections of SE Pond and West Pond of Staging Area 2 show that the bottom of the ponds are 0.3 foot and 0.7 foot above seasonal high water tables, which are less than design criteria of 1-foot separation. Please revise the design. Refer to Section 5.1 of Suwannee River Water Management District Volume II Applicant's Handbook.

Response:

Additional cross sections to show / verify that 1 foot of separation is provided between the bottom of pond and the seasonal high water table for all staging areas. Please see the updated cross sections of the SE Pond and West Pond of Staging Area 2 included as part of RAI2 Attachment E-1. Also, refer to the Tables described in the response to No. 8 above.

10. Please clarify in the Typical Staging Area if Ground Layer will be compacted. No compaction is preferred to promote soil percolation. Refer to Part 2 of Section E of ERP Application.

Response:

Except under the perimeter road, the ground layer will not be compacted. Notes were added to each staging plan and detail sheet as well as the typical section to indicate that the ground will not be compacted. Refer to RAI2 Attachment E-1.

11. The proposed berm in northeast corner of Staging Area 4 may block existing offsite flow. Please verify to assure no adverse impact to adjacent land. Refer to rule 62-330.301(1), F.A.C.

Response:

The berm on Staging Area 4 has been re-shaped so that it does not block existing offsite flow. Please see the updated cross section in RAI2 Attachment E-1 for the northeast corner of Staging Area 4. Refer to response to No. 8 for additional information.

12. Staging Area 4 is in a Flood Zone A area. Please provide a call-out and note in the design that the area shall not be used for storage or occupied. Otherwise, floodplain compensation shall be provided for the encroachment. If this is the case, please provide calculation and design. Refer to rule 62-330.301(1), F.A.C.

Response:

We have added a call out and note on the drawing to say that the Flood Zone A area shall not be used for storage or occupied. Please see the included note on the plan view for Staging Area 4 provided as part of RAI2 Attachment E-1.

13. Per RAI Response under Item 8, please provide site specific stormwater design and calculations for Stage Areas 1, 6, and 7 once the final locations are determined, and for the repeater station after collection of the necessary field data is completed. Refer to rule 62-330.301(1), F.A.C.

Response:

Refer to RAI2 Attachment E-2 for revised repeater station information, which has been uploaded to the Department's FTP site. The information includes site specific stormwater design and calculations for the repeater station.

Please note that Staging Areas 1, 6 and 7 are no longer proposed. Staging Areas 2, 3, 4, 5 and 8 will be the only temporary staging areas part of the project. Refer to RAI2 Attachment E-1 for details pertaining to the proposed Staging Areas.

Proprietary Review

14. 1st RAI, Item 11: *Sufficient Upland Interest in the riparian parcels adjacent to the Sovereign submerged Land Easements is required to be submitted to the Department prior to execution of the Easement.*

Per 18-21.009(1)(c), FAC, please provide a revised Table 3, or create Table 3a (preferred), summarizing the 12 waterbodies which Div. of State Lands has confirmed as SSL and will need public easements for the aerial crossings. The table columns should include: Milepost; County; ID (as in existing Table 3); then add Waterbody (WB) Name; Square footage of Easement; WB Designation as AP or OFW or n/a; and latitude / longitude (rounding okay, such as 30.4436°N, -83.7243°W).

Response:

GPC understands that Sufficient Upland Interest is needed prior to execution of the Sovereign Submerged Lands easements. That documentation will be provided prior to permit issuance. GPC is currently working toward acquiring those upland rights, several of which are on State-owned Uplands.

The requested Table 3a was previously provided to FDEP on December 31st, and is provided again as RAI2 Attachment F-1 for reference.

15. *Sufficient Upland Interest in the riparian parcels adjacent to the Sovereign Submerged Land Easements is required to be submitted to the Department prior to execution of the Easement. [18-21.009(1)(c), FAC]*

Response:

Please see response to Question 14.

16. *Any crossings on State-Owned Uplands will require authorization/permission from the State of Florida for proposed work on State-Owned Uplands. Any crossings on Water Management District Property will require authorization/permission from the appropriate Water Management District. In addition, any crossings in areas currently under easement by Florida Dept of Transportation will require authorization/permission from FDOT. [Rules 18-21.004(3)b. and 18-2.018, F.A.C.]*

On 6/28/2019 Gulf Power Company submitted an application for authorization to use state-owned lands for a Private Easement pursuant to Chapter 253, Florida Statutes. On 7/3/2019, Division of State Lands staff issued a RAI in regard to this application. Please provide a response to the Division of State Lands RAI.

Response:

GPC is continuing to coordinate with the Division of State Lands and the appropriate managing agencies to acquire easements on State-Owned Uplands. Upon receipt of a concurrence letter from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for a proposed

crossing at and adjacent to Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area, GPC will submit the managing agency's letter to the Division of State Lands so their review of our application for upland easement can continue. Similarly, authorizations are being sought from Suwannee River Water Management District and the Florida Department of Transportation for those parcels that are affected by the project.

17. Per 1st RAI response FDEP understand that GPC plans to pay the easement process fee with check # 0103478. However, FDEP records indicate that the easement processing fee has not been received. Please submit the easement processing fee of \$669.00. [18-21.009(1)(g), FAC]

Response:

Payment for the processing fee was submitted in November 2019. GPC has confirmed with FDEP that the required payment has been received.

Complete Application

18. Because of the large scope of this project and multiple RAIs (with responses provided), please specify which materials will constitute the final ERP application for FDEP completeness review. [62-330.060 F.A.C.]

Response:

Please see RAI2 Attachment G-1. This list identifies which documents from previous submittals have been superseded to provide the most current set of documents for review.