



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
MOBILE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
BIRMINGHAM FIELD OFFICE  
218 SUMMIT PARKWAY, SUITE 222  
HOMEWOOD, ALABAMA 35209

CESAM-RD-N  
PUBLIC NOTICE NO. SAM-2015-01149-SLJ

January 7, 2016

**PUBLIC NOTICE  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

**PROPOSAL TO ACCEPT AND EXPEND STATE FUNDS CONTRIBUTED BY THE  
ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: This Public Notice announces the Mobile and Nashville District's proposal to accept and expend State funds contributed by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT). Two federal authorities allow ALDOT to apportion part of their annual federal transportation-aid funds for the purpose of expediting permit reviews. The authorities also allow U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to accept and expend these funds for the same purpose. The funds would be accepted pursuant to any of the following authorities:

1. Section 214 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2000, as amended (P.L. 106-541);
2. Title 23 U.S. Code Section 139(j) (Efficient Environmental Reviews for Project Decision-making).

With the additional funds, the Mobile District would hire additional Regulatory staff to work on ALDOT proposed and/or funded projects and permit applications, as well as county and municipal projects funded by ALDOT, statewide, in both the Mobile District's and the Nashville District's areas of responsibility. The District would establish a separate account for the ALDOT funding to track receipt and expenditure of funds. The District Regulatory staff would charge their time against the respective account when they performed work on ALDOT proposed and/or funded projects. The USACE Regulatory Program is funded as a congressionally appropriated line item in the annual federal budget. Additional funds received from non-Federal public entities would be used in accordance with the provisions of the above authorities to prioritize and more expeditiously review and process ALDOT proposed and/or funded projects.

The funds would expedite the exchange of concerns and information between the USACE, ALDOT and other agencies, including initiation of such dialogs prior to the submission of the application. This early and continuing dialog is expected to enable ALDOT and entities receiving ALDOT funding to incorporate these concerns in the project design and application submittals. Under the proposed process of

efficient transportation decision making, the USACE would be obtaining information early in the process and prior to the submission of an application.

After submittal of the application, it is expected that this early involvement would result in a shortening of the time between application and the permit decision. The permit decision itself would not be affected by the funds and this process. The USACE decision whether to issue or deny the permit is and would continue to be based on USACE regulations, the analysis of the proposed project, the applicant's submittals, comments from the public (where applicable) and other information.

Funds would mainly be expended on the salaries and overhead of Mobile District Regulatory Project Managers performing expedited evaluation activities for ALDOT and ALDOT funded entities. Work would include, but is not limited to: review of jurisdictional determinations/verifications, permit applications, project alternatives, ecological surveys, environmental documents, mitigation plans, functional assessments, project meetings, compliance, field investigations, interagency meetings and programmatic initiatives. Funds may also be expended to hire contractors to perform select duties such as site investigations and administrative duties.

To ensure impartial decision making, all final permit decisions for cases where these funds are used would be reviewed by at least one level above the reviewer. The Mobile District will use established guidance to determine the appropriate level of the decision maker and higher-level review.

The Districts do not expect this method of expediting permit review of ALDOT proposed and/or funded projects to negatively impact the Districts' Regulatory Program or to increase the processing time for other permit evaluations. With the addition of personnel dedicated to work on ALDOT proposed and/or funded projects, current Regulatory staff would be able to devote their resources to non-highway projects.

Following the close of this Public Notice, the Mobile District Commander will determine whether or not acceptance and expenditure of funds as described above is in compliance with the above authorities and the public interest is better served through cost-effectiveness, enhanced evaluation capability, streamlined permit processing or other appropriate justification. A final Public Notice will be issued announcing the decision. No new Public Notices will be issued if it is necessary to increase funds, provided the purpose remains the same.

Correspondence concerning this Public Notice should refer to Public Notice Number SAM-2015-01149-SLJ and should be directed to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mobile District  
Birmingham Field Office

Attention: Ms. Shannon Johnson  
218 Summit Parkway, Suite 222  
Homewood, Alabama 35209

Comments should be received no later than **30 days** from the date of this Public notice.

If you have any questions concerning this publication, you may contact the project manager via e-mail at **Shannon.L.Johnson@usace.army.mil** or telephone number **(205) 290-9096**. Please refer to the above Public Notice number.

For additional information about our Regulatory Program, please visit our web site at <http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx>, and please take a moment to complete our customer satisfaction survey while you are there. Your responses are appreciated and will allow us to improve our services.

MOBILE DISTRICT  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers