May 12, 2015

Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Construction & Facilities Management
Attn: Pam Peckham
425 Street NW
Washington DC 20001

RE: Bureau of Water Environmental for Florence National Cemetery Property Acquisition Project

Dear Mrs. Wilson

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control’s Bureau of Water (Bureau) has received your request for a review of the above project. Our Bureau protects water quality through implementation of its regulations. This coordinated response represents all program areas within the Bureau, but does not represent a review of other potential regulatory requirements administered by other SCDHEC Bureaus. To ensure protection and maintenance of water resources, the Bureau recommends the following issues be addressed when planning and carrying out this project:

☐ No apparent impacts to water quality. No Bureau permits required.
X Any non-point discharges into a stream or river from construction areas of one acre or more will require a Bureau administered Stormwater Management and Sediment Control Permit. Construction areas of one acre or more will also be subject to NPDES Stormwater permit regulations.
X Any placement of fill material or dredging in waters of the State, including jurisdictional wetlands, will require a Bureau administered Section 401 Certification and an Army Corps of Engineers administered Section 404 Permit. When evaluating application for fill in wetlands, demonstration of avoidance and minimization of wetland impacts and mitigation of unavoidable wetland impacts provides assurances that impacts have been lessened to the extent possible and that water quality standards will be upheld. Documentation of these measures will be required.
☐ A Construction in Navigable Waters Permit will be required for all construction within navigable waters of South Carolina.
☐ Drinking water system construction requires a permit from the Bureau. Our review of acceptability will occur with review of application for a permit. Also, the applicant should check with the local water utility on available capacity.
☐ Sewer system construction requires a permit from the Bureau. Our review of acceptability will occur with review of application for a permit. Also, the applicant should check with the local water utility on available capacity.
With new businesses and other commercial or industrial operations, wastewater pretreatment permits or other local approvals may be required.

Other:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. If you have any questions, please contact Monica Taylor at (803) 898-4176 or taylormn@dhec.sc.gov.

Sincerely,

Monica Taylor
Bureau of Water
June 10, 2015

Mrs. Pam Peckham
Project Manager, Real Property Service
Department of Veteran Affairs
425 I Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Florence, SC National Cemetery Expansion

Dear Mrs. Peckham,

Personnel with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) have reviewed the proposed project area and offer the following comments.

The project area is located approximately one mile west of Florence Regional Airport in Florence, Florence County, South Carolina. Total acreage of the land in the study area is approximately 14 acres. Currently, the surrounding area consists of mixed commercial residential land uses, an existing National Cemetery and vacant land owned by the City of Florence.

At the current time, there are no records of any threatened or endangered species; however, spotted turtles (*Clemmys guttata*) are a South Carolina conservation priority species and are also a Candidate Species for potential protection under the Endangered Species Act. There are no known records according to SCDNR data at this time that spotted turtles inhabit the impact site; however, spotted turtles are a semi-aquatic species that inhabit a variety of wetland types across the Coastal Plain of South Carolina. Potential impacts of the proposed project to spotted turtles should be evaluated and consultation conducted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Appropriate measures should be taken to minimize or avoid impacts to this species of concern. Spotted turtles are most active from February to mid-April. Please keep in mind that information in regards to the presence or absence of species is derived from existing databases, and we do not assume that it is complete. Areas not yet inventoried by SCDNR biologists may contain significant species or communities.

Review of aerial photography, soil survey information, topographic maps and photo documentation provided indicate that wetlands are present in your project area. SCDNR advises that the Veteran’s Administration consult with the U.S. Army Corps of
Engineers (www.sac.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory) to determine if jurisdictional wetlands are present and if a permit and mitigation is required for activities impacting these areas. If jurisdictional areas are present, SCDNR recommends that developed project plans avoid or minimize impacts where practicable. SCDNR reserves the right to review any required federal or state permits and mitigation proposals at the time of public notice.

Should you have any questions or need more information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at rigginl@dnr.sc.gov or by phone at 803.734.4199.

Sincerely,

Lorianne Riggin
Office of Environmental Programs
1000 Assembly Street Suite 336
PO Box 167
Columbia, SC 29202
803.734.4199 Office
803.734.9809 Fax
rigginl@dnr.sc.gov
June 10, 2015

Mrs. Pam Peckham
Project Manager, Real Property Service
Department of Veteran Affairs
425 I Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Florence, SC National Cemetary Expansion

Dear Mrs. Peckham,

Personnel with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) have reviewed the proposed project area and offer the following comments.

The project area is located approximately one mile west of Florence Regional Airport in Florence, Florence County, South Carolina. Total acreage of the land in the study area is approximately 14 acres. Currently, the surrounding area consists of mixed commercial residential land uses, an existing National Cemetery and vacant land owned by the City of Florence.

At the current time, there are no records of any threatened or endangered species; however, spotted turtles (*Clemmys guttata*) are a South Carolina conservation priority species and are also a Candidate Species for potential protection under the Endangered Species Act. There are no known records according to SCDNR data at this time that spotted turtles inhabit the impact site; however, spotted turtles are a semi-aquatic species that inhabit a variety of wetland types across the Coastal Plain of South Carolina. Potential impacts of the proposed project to spotted turtles should be evaluated and consultation conducted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Appropriate measures should be taken to minimize or avoid impacts to this species of concern. Spotted turtles are most active from February to mid-April. Please keep in mind that information in regards to the presence or absence of species is derived from existing databases, and we do not assume that it is complete. Areas not yet inventoried by SCDNR biologists may contain significant species or communities.

Review of aerial photography, soil survey information, topographic maps and photo documentation provided indicate that wetlands are present in your project area. SCDNR advises that the Veteran’s Administration consult with the U.S. Army Corps of
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Should you have any questions or need more information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at rigginl@dnr.sc.gov or by phone at 803.734.4199.

Sincerely,

Lorianne Riggin
Office of Environmental Programs
1000 Assembly Street Suite 336
PO Box 167
Columbia, SC 29202
803.734.4199 Office
803.734.9809 Fax
rigginl@dnr.sc.gov
May 26, 2015

Pam Peckham
Real Property Service (003C1E)
Department of Veterans Affairs
425 I Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Florence National Cemetery Property Acquisition
Florence, Florence County, South Carolina
SHPO Project No. 15JS0230

Dear Ms. Peckham:

Our office has received the scoping letter dated May 1, 2015 that you submitted as part of your agency's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for the project referenced above. We also received maps, photographs, and the Cultural Resources Assessment of the Proposed Florence National Cemetery Expansion (draft) by Brockington and Associates. This letter is for preliminary, informational purposes only and does not constitute consultation or agency coordination with our office as defined in 36 CFR 800: “Protection of Historic Properties” or by any state regulatory process. If the Department of Veterans Affairs chooses to substitute the NEPA process for the process outlined in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, your agency must notify our office of the proposed substitution.

Our office maintains several resources for identifying historic properties. ArchSite is an online Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping program that includes all known historic and archaeological sites in South Carolina. Information on ArchSite can be found here: http://archsitc.eas-sc.edu/ArchSite/. A list of properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places can be found here: http://www.nationalregister.sc.gov/nrlinks.htm. Additional historic contexts, survey reports, and related historic property documents can be found here: http://shpo.sc.gov/research/Pages/conreps.aspx. These sources should assist your agency in identifying historic properties for NEPA scoping.

The project area includes the Florence National Cemetery and The Stockade, properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Our office concurs with Brockington's recommendation that an intensive cultural resources survey be conducted of the project tract.

The State Historic Preservation Office will provide comments regarding historic and archaeological resources and effects to them once the federal or state agency initiates consultation. Project Review Forms and additional guidance regarding our office's role in the compliance process and historic preservation can be found on our website at: http://shpo.sc.gov/programs/revcomp.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (803) 896-6129 or at sylvestr@scdah.state.sc.us.

Sincerely,

John Sylvestr
Project Review Coordinator
State Historic Preservation Office
South Carolina Department of Archives & History

S. C. Department of Archives & History • 8301 Parklane Road • Columbia • South Carolina • 29223-4905 • (803) 896-6100 • http://scdah.sc.gov
May 14, 2015

Hydraulics, Hydrology
And Geotechnical Section

Ms. Pam Peckham
Department of Veteran Affairs
Real Property Service (003CIF)
425 I Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Ms. Peckham:

This is in response to your letter dated April 29, 2015, to this office concerning the Florence National Cemetery Property Acquisition Project located in Florence County, S.C. Your location maps are enclosed.

Based on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for Florence County, S.C., (copy enclosed, panel number 45011C 0134F and 0142F, effective date: December 16, 2004), your project, as depicted by you, appears to be located in Zone X, areas determined to be outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain.

If the above referenced project requires any alteration to wetland areas (i.e., discharging dredged or filled material or mechanized land clearing activities), a Department of the Army permit will be required. If you have any questions regarding wetlands, I recommend that you contact the Charleston District Regulatory Branch at (843) 329-8044.

Please refer any other questions concerning the content of this response to Beth Barber at (843) 329-8149.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

Sara A. Brown, P.E.
Hydraulics, Hydrology
and Geotechnical Section

Enclosures
THE WETLAND LOCATIONS SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE APPROXIMATE. THEY HAVE BEEN DELINEATED BY ECS. THEY HAVE NOT BEEN VERIFIED BY THE U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS OR SURVEYED AT THIS TIME. THESE AREAS ARE NOT TO SCALE AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE UPON USACE INSPECTION/LAND SURVEY.
Mr. Eric McClanahan  
ECS Carolinas, LLP  
3820 Faber Place, Suite 500  
North Charleston, SC 29405

Re: Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluation, Florence National Cemetery  
Florence County, ECS Project No. 34-2048 (Revised April 6, 2015)  
FWS Log No. 2015-I-0264

Dear Mr. McClanahan:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has received your revised evaluation of threatened and endangered (T&E) species that may be impacted by the potential expansion of the Florence National Cemetery, Florence, South Carolina. Your revision follows the Service’s consultation of April 6, 2015, in which we determined that the American wood stork was not addressed in your initial evaluation. We recommended that ECS Carolinas reevaluate the site to determine the potential impacts upon the American wood stork a T&E species known to occur within Florence County.

Your revised evaluation found that habitat adjacent to the expansion site that is suitable for the American wood stork, however no individuals were sighted. Further, you did not observe individuals on the project site and that the potential expansion of the cemetery is not expected to impact the species. Upon review of the additional information provided, the Service agrees with your conclusion that expansion of the cemetery is not likely to adversely affect the American wood stork and finds that you have satisfied section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Please note that obligations under the ESA must be reconsidered if: (1) new information reveals impacts of this identified action may affect any listed species or critical habitat in a manner not previously considered; (2) this action is subsequently modified in a manner, which was not considered in this assessment; or (3) a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated that may be affected by the identified action.

If you need further assistance, please contact Mr. Mark Caldwell at (843) 727-4707 ext. 215, and reference FWS Log No. 2015-I-0264.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. McCoy  
Acting Field Supervisor

TDM/MAC
Ms. Pam Peckham  
Project Manager  
Real Property Service (003C1E)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
425 I Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Re: Florence National Cemetery, Florence County, ECS Project No. 34-2048,  
FWS Log No. 2015-CPA-0090

Dear Ms. Peckham:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has received your April 29, 2015, letter requesting review of the above-referenced project. The Veterans Administration (VA) is conducting an environmental scoping review for the planned purchase of land adjacent to the Florence National Cemetery on Cherokee Road in the City of Florence, Florence County, South Carolina. The VA has not considered alternatives for development of the site as no defined use for the property has been identified. However, the VA is seeking information regarding the site pursuant to the requirements the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 USC 4321-4370f).

The Service previously reviewed the proposed expansion on April 2, 2015, through an Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation requested by ECS Carolinas LLP (enclosed). Our consultation concluded that area adjacent to the existing cemetery contained no federally designated critical habitat or any habitat suitable for federally threatened or endangered (T&E) species. Although no habitat for T&E species is present, the site may harbor conditions favorable to At Risk Species (ARS) which have been petitioned for listing under the ESA. We have also enclosed a list of ARS that may be listed in the future. We recommend the VA consider these species in their project planning efforts. Incorporating proactive measures to avoid or minimize harm to ARS may improve their status and assist with precluding the need to list these species. Additional information on ARS can be found at:

http://www.fws.gov/southeast/candidateconservation
In review of the National Wetland Inventory maps the Service finds that the majority of lands to be acquired by the VA may contain a significant amount of freshwater wetlands. The wetlands are classified as palustrine forested and are a part of a tributary which flows into Jeffries Creek. The palustrine forested wetlands on site serve many valuable natural resource functions including flood control, water purification, and water table recharge. Wetlands also support a variety of wildlife including reptiles, amphibians, small mammals, and avian species by providing foraging and breeding habitat. The Service recommends that the VA consider these important functions in future development plans and avoid impacting wetlands to the maximum extent possible. As the wetlands onsite are protected under the Clean Water Act, we recommend the VA contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Charleston District for further information regarding wetland regulations.

Please contact the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources regarding potential impacts to State protected resources. If you have further questions or require additional information, please contact Mr. Mark Caldwell of this office at (843) 727-4707 ext. 215 and reference FWS Log No. 2015-CPA-0090.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

for Thomas D. McCoy
Field Supervisor

TDM/MAC
Mr. Eric McClanahan  
ECS Carolinas, LLP  
3820 Faber Place, Suite 500  
North Charleston, SC  29405  

Re: Threatened and Endangered Species Evaluation, Florence National Cemetery  
Florence County, ECS Project No. 34-2048  
FWS Log No. 2015-1-0264  

Dear Mr. McClanahan:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed your March 2, 2015, letter requesting review of the above-referenced project. The proposed project involves the expansion of the Florence National Cemetery on Cherokee Road in the City of Florence, Florence County, South Carolina. ECS Carolinas, LLP (ECS) performed a species survey on the 14-acre site to determine the presence of threatened and endangered (T&E) species in preparation for the expansion. The following comments are provided in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 661-667c), and the Endangered Species Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543) (ESA).

Personnel with ECS surveyed the site for the presence of three T&E species: the red-cockaded woodpecker, American chaffseed, and Canby’s dropwort on February 10, 2014. Your survey was conducted outside the Service’s recommended survey window for the American chaffseed (May - August) and Canby’s dropwort (Mid-July-September). The survey windows represent the flowering season and offer the best time for plant identification. However, you have determined that no suitable habitat exists onsite for either of these plant species. As such, there is no potential for the plants to occur within the project boundaries. You also determined that no suitable foraging or nesting habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker occurs onsite. Please note that the federally threatened American wood stork (Mycteria americana), which is listed as occurring in Florence County, was not considered in your assessment. In order to provide a complete protected species evaluation a survey for the American wood stork and its potential habitat is required.
Due to the lack of suitable habitat ECS determined that expansion of the cemetery is not expected to impact the red-cockaded woodpecker, American chaffseed, or Canby's dropwort. After a review of our data and the information provided, the Service concurs with your determination. However, ECS must perform an additional survey to review potential impacts to the American wood stork. Results of your survey should be submitted to this office for review prior to the project's initiation.

Obligations under the ESA must be reconsidered if: (1) new information reveals that the proposed project may affect listed species in a manner or to an extent not previously considered, (2) the proposed project is subsequently modified in a manner, which was not considered during this consultation; or (3) new species are listed or critical habitat designated that might be affected by the proposed project.

The Service has included a list of species that have been petitioned for listing under the ESA as well as Candidate Species. These species are collectively referred to as "At-Risk Species" (ARS). We have included lists of the ARS that may occur in Florence County, South Carolina. Although there are no Federal protections afforded to ARS, please consider including them in your project efforts. Incorporating proactive measures to avoid or minimize harm to ARS may improve their status and assist with precluding the need to list these species. Additional information on ARS can be found at:

http://www.fws.gov/southeast/candidateconservation

Please contact the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources regarding potential impacts to State protected resources. As the project site contains wetlands, please contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District. If you have further questions or require additional information, please contact Mr. Mark Caldwell of this office at (843) 727-4707 ext. 215, and reference FWS Log No. 2015-1-0264.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. McCoy
Field Supervisor

TDM/MAC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>COMMON NAME/STATUS</th>
<th>SCIENTIFIC NAME</th>
<th>SURVEY WINDOW/ TIME PERIOD</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amphibian</td>
<td>American wood stork (T)</td>
<td>Mycteria americana</td>
<td>February 15-September 1</td>
<td>Nesting season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird</td>
<td>Bald eagle (BSEPA)</td>
<td>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</td>
<td>October 1-May 15</td>
<td>Nesting season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red-cockaded woodpecker (E)</td>
<td>Picoides borealis</td>
<td>April 1-July 31</td>
<td>Nesting season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crustacean</td>
<td>None Found</td>
<td>None Found</td>
<td>None Found</td>
<td>None Found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>American eel (ARS)</td>
<td>Anguilla rostrata</td>
<td>March 1-May 30; October 1-December 15</td>
<td>Temperature dependent: normally (17-20°C), can be found between 13-25°C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atlantic sturgeon* (E)</td>
<td>Acipenser oxyrinchus</td>
<td>February 1-April 30</td>
<td>Spawning migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blueback herring (ARS)</td>
<td>Alevis fistulata</td>
<td>Mid-January-mid May</td>
<td>Peak: March-April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robust redhorse (ARS)</td>
<td>Moxostoma robustum</td>
<td>Late April-early May</td>
<td>Temperature dependent: 16-24°C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shortnose sturgeon* (E)</td>
<td>Acipenser brevirostrum*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insect</td>
<td>None Found</td>
<td>None Found</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mammal</td>
<td>Tri-colored bat (ARS)*</td>
<td>Perimyotis subflavus</td>
<td>Year round</td>
<td>Found in mines and caves in the winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mollusk</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant</td>
<td>American chaffseed (E)</td>
<td>Schwalleria americana</td>
<td>May-August</td>
<td>1-2 months after a fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bay baronet (ARS)</td>
<td>Eupatorium perfoliatum</td>
<td>August-September</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bryn's liverleaf (ARS)</td>
<td>Labeo bryni</td>
<td>May-July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canby's dropwort (E)</td>
<td>Gypsophila canbyi</td>
<td>May-July-September</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carolina-birds-in-a-nest (ARS)</td>
<td>Meconopsis caroliniana</td>
<td>July-November</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evergreen quillwort (ARS)</td>
<td>Isotes hystrix</td>
<td>July-August</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Georgia headplant (ARS)</td>
<td>Amaranthus georgiae var. georgiae</td>
<td>May-August</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yellow pond lily (ARS)</td>
<td>Nuphar lutea ssp. sulpitiploa</td>
<td>May-August</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reptile</td>
<td>Spotted turtle (ARS)</td>
<td>Clemmys guttata</td>
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* Contact National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for more information on this species
** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and NMFS share jurisdiction of this species
ARS Species that the FWS has petitioned to list and for which a positive 90-day finding has been issued (listing may be warranted); information is provided only for conservation actions as no federal protections currently exist.
ARS* Species that are either former Candidate Species or are emerging conservation priority species
BSEPA Federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
C FWS or NMFS has on file sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threat(s) to support proposals to list these species
CH Critical Habitat
E Federally Endangered
F or P - CH Proposed for listing or critical habitat in the Federal Register
S/A Federally protected due to similarity of appearance to a listed species
T Federally Threatened

These lists should be used only as a guideline, not as the final authority. The lists include known occurrences and areas where the species has a high possibility of occurring. Records are updated as deemed necessary and may differ from earlier lists.

For a list of State endangered, threatened, and species of concern, please visit [http://www.dnr.sc.gov/nature/index.html](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/nature/index.html).

2/14/2015
# South Carolina List of At-Risk, Candidate, Endangered, and Threatened Species - Florence County

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<td>Carolina-birds-in-a-nest (ARS)</td>
<td><em>Macbridea carolinana</em></td>
<td>July-November</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evergreen quillwort (ARS)</td>
<td><em>Isoetes heyemalis</em></td>
<td>Late June-July</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Georgia leadplant (ARS)</td>
<td><em>Amorpha georgiana var. georgiana</em></td>
<td>Late April-October</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yellow pond lily (ARS)</td>
<td><em>Nuphar lutea ssp. sagittifolia</em></td>
<td>April-October</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reptile</td>
<td>Spotted turtle (ARS)</td>
<td><em>Clemmys guttata</em></td>
<td>February-mid April</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Contact National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for more information on this species
** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and NMFS share jurisdiction of this species
ARS Species that the FWS has been petitioned to list and for which a positive 90-day finding has been issued (listing may be warranted); information is provided only for conservation actions as no Federal protections currently exist.
ARS* Species that are either former Candidate Species or are emerging conservation priority species
BGPA Federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
C FWS or NMFS has on file sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threat(s) to support proposals to list these species
CH Critical Habitat
E Federally Endangered
P or P - CH Proposed for listing or critical habitat in the Federal Register
S/A Federally protected due to similarity of appearance to a listed species
T Federally Threatened

These lists should be used only as a guideline, not as the final authority. The lists include known occurrences and areas where the species has a high possibility of occurring. Records are updated as deemed necessary and may differ from earlier lists.

For a list of State endangered, threatened, and species of concern, please visit [https://www.dnr.sc.gov/species/index.html](https://www.dnr.sc.gov/species/index.html).

2/24/2015