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April 2, 2004

Colonel Roger Gerber
District Engineer
US Army Corps of Engineers
Savannah District
PO Box 889
Savannah, GA 31402-0889

RE: Savannah Harbor Expansion Project: WQMAP Hydrodynamic and Salinity Model

Dear Colonel Gerber:

The Department appreciates the opportunity to participate in the review process for the proposed Savannah Harbor Expansion Project. Bureau of Water staff have spent considerable time working with your office and other federal and state agencies involved with the project. Our involvement has led us to conclude that, in its current state, the WQMAP hydrodynamic/salinity model developed for the Georgia Ports Authority by Applied Technology and Management is not a defensible tool and is not acceptable for use in determining impacts associated with the Expansion Project. Concerns expressed by our staff and the federal review agencies call into question the empirical vertical mixing approach as well as other aspects of the hydrodynamic model. Further, questions raised concerning the water quality model calibration indicate additional work is needed on that portion of the model in the event questions concerning vertical mixing are addressed.

Development of a defensible modeling tool to evaluate the potential impacts associated with the deepening of Savannah Harbor is imperative. We look forward to working with you and your staff as this project proceeds. If you have questions concerning our position on this matter, please call me at (803) 898-4300 or Larry Turner at (803) 898-4005.

Sincerely,

Alton C. Boozer
Chief, Bureau of Water

Cc: Bob King