



PRESS NOTICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BATESBURG MAN SENTENCED FOR NORTH AUGUSTA CLEAN WATER VIOLATION

Columbia, South Carolina---- United States Attorney Bill Nettles stated today that John Ashley Mabus, age 44, of Batesburg, South Carolina, was sentenced today in federal court in Columbia, South Carolina, for a Negligent Violation of the Clean Water Act, as prohibited by 33 U.S.C. § 1319(c)(1)(A). United States Magistrate Judge Joseph R. McCrorey sentenced Mabus to five years probation, eight months of which must be spent in home confinement. Mabus must also pay a \$7,500 fine.

Evidence presented at the change of plea hearing established that Mabus and his company, Mabus Construction Co., Inc., were digging a ditch for a sewer line

near Clearwater Finishing Industrial Facility, an abandoned textile mill located in North Augusta, South Carolina. As Mabus and those working for him dug, water from a heavy metal-contaminated lagoon infiltrated the ditch. To stop the infiltration, Mabus instructed his employees to pump water from the lagoon into Little Horse Creek, a tributary of the Savannah River, for approximately three days in January 2008, draining the pond. Mabus and his employees piped approximately four million gallons of industrial wastewater and sludge into Little Horse Creek using an industrial pump with a four-inch hose. As a result, Little Horse Creek became contaminated. Since then, investigators report that the regular flow of the creek substantially has disbursed the contaminants away from the site and diluted them.

The case was investigated by agents of the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Criminal Investigation Division, and Investigators for the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. Assistant United States Attorney Winston Holliday of the Columbia office handled the case.

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