The Freshwater Consulting Group

DEPT WATER AFFAIRS
27 JAN 2017
RECEIVED
mAlberti
G.

Department of Water and Sanitation
Water Use Control
Western Cape
Private Bag x16
Sanlamhof
Belville
7532
Tel: 021 941 6183

16 January 2017

For Attention: Warren Dreyer

APPLICATION FOR A GENERAL AUTHORISATION FOR THE PROPOSED MARINE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CABLE SYSTEM (ACE CABLE SYSTEM), VAN RIEBEEKSTRAND, SOUTH AFRICA

This project aims to install a submarine telecommunication cable (ACE Cable system) to link South Africa, the West Coast of Africa and Europe with key international telecommunication hubs in Europe. From a water perspective, this application relates specifically to the wetlands located at Van Riebeekstrand and Duynefontein as the proposed marine telecommunications cable system is to be landed at Van Riebeekstrand and run from the front dune to the Beach Man Hole (BMH), located on the edge of the residential suburb of Van Riebeekstrand. In doing so, the cable system will run through the Van Riebeekstrand wetland. From the BMH, the cable will be buried within the road servitudes of the suburbs of Van Riebeekstrand and Duynefontein (two alternate routes have been proposed, both with no impact) until reaching the Cable Landing Station (CLS) in Duynefontein. The CLS is located on an empty erf, which has been previously disturbed and is accessible using an existing road network (refer to freshwater ecological report).

The impact of this project has been proven to be negligible as per the Freshwater Specialist`s Assessment and Risk Matrix, regarding the wetland systems under discussion. The entry point for the cable installation will not require the breaking of soil of the Van Riebeekstrand wetland as it will be buried under an existing dirt road that has been running through the wetland for years. Therefore the wetland will not need to be excavated and the cable will be buried within the centre of the existing dirt road. The construction will involve the digging of trenches, mostly using spades. The cable will be buried between 1 and 1.5 m deep and will have a 2 m buffer zone in width. This allows the cable to pass through the wetland with negligible impact to the natural system and the area of the wetland in question. The surrounding dunes will undergo rehabilitation after laying of the cable has taken place. This rehabilitation will involve the planting of any vegetation and materials disturbed during the installation.