3.4 Normal Weather Conditions

TTL calculates a subject site's normal weather conditions before performing site work to understand whether aquatic features in the landscape may exhibit certain characteristics related to current and near past hydrologic regime. TTL calculates data obtained from an on-line NRCS climactic database, Agricultural Applied Climate Information System (AgACIS), and derives its calculation method from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's guide for making hydrologic determinations (TDEC, 2011). An evaluation of weather conditions was performed for the three-month period prior to the field activities. Calculations for the site indicate that the weather conditions were drier than normal for the time of year that field work was performed.

The Palmer Drought Severity Index provided by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is accessed at http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/research/prelim/drought/palmer.html and was used to cross-reference the results calculated. The Palmer Drought Severity Index indicates that the region of the site experienced no drought conditions during the weeks prior to the site visit.

As an additional cross-reference, the U.S. Drought Monitor was accessed and evaluated. The U.S. Drought Monitor is produced through a partnership between the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and NOAA. The most recent update of the U.S. Drought Monitor (March 12, 2019) Map of Georgia exhibited no drought conditions in the vicinity of the review area.

The Normal Weather Conditions Table, AgACIS data, Palmer Drought Severity Index Map, and U.S Drought Monitor Map of Georgia are included in Appendix A.

4.0 WETLAND AND WATERS DELINEATION

4.1 Wetland Identification Methodology

TTL utilizes the *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual* (USACE, 1987) and *Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain Region* (USACE, 2010) technical guidelines for determining the presence of wetlands. This determination requires that a positive wetland indicator be present for each of the three parameters (hydrology, soil, and vegetation), with the exception of areas altered by recent human activities or natural events. During field activities, TTL assessed the project area for the presence of hydrophytic vegetation and used a Dutch hand-auger to evaluate the project area for the presence of hydric soils. TTL examined the soil for hydric soil indicators as identified in the *Field Indicators of Hydric Soils in the United States, V. 8.1* (NRCS, 2017). Additionally, TTL observed the project area