

## **US Army Corps Permits and Procedures for Post Storm Conditions and Flooding Events**

**SUBJECT: (2012) Norfolk District Corps of Engineers Regulatory Branch authorizations commonly used in response to emergency/post storm conditions and flooding events.**

### **Exemptions:**

**Farming:** Pursuant to 33 CFR Section 323.4 (a) (1) (iii) (C) (iv), Discharges not requiring permits: The discharges of dredged or fill material incidental to the emergency removal of sandbars, gravel bars, or other similar blockages which are formed during flood flows or other events, where such blockages close or constrict previously existing drainageways and, if not promptly removed, would result in damage to or loss of existing crops or would impair or prevent the plowing, seeding, harvesting or cultivating of crops on land in established use for crop production. Such removal does not include enlarging or extending the dimensions of, or changing the bottom elevations of, the affected drainageway as it existed prior to the formation of the blockage. Removal must be accomplished within one year of discovery of such blockages in order to be eligible for exemption.

**Maintenance:** Pursuant to 33 CFR Section 323.4(a)(2), Maintenance, including emergency reconstruction of recently damaged parts, of currently serviceable structures such as dikes, dams, levees, groins, riprap, breakwaters, causeways, bridge abutments or approaches, and transportation structures. *Maintenance does not include any modification that changes the character, scope, or size of the original fill design. Emergency reconstruction must occur within a reasonable period of time after damage occurs in order to qualify for this exemption.*

### **Nationwide Permits (NWP):**

**NWP #3. Maintenance:** This NWP authorizes (a) The repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of any previously authorized, currently serviceable structure, or fill, or of any currently serviceable structure or fill authorized by 33 CFR 330.3, provided that the structure or fill is not to be put to uses differing from those uses specified or contemplated for it in the original permit or the most recently authorized modification. Minor deviations in the structure's configuration or filled area, including those due to changes in materials, construction techniques, requirements of other regulatory agencies, or current construction codes or safety standards that are necessary to make the repair, rehabilitation, or replacement are authorized. Any stream channel modification is limited to the minimum necessary for the repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of the structure or fill; such modifications, including the removal of material from the stream channel, must be immediately adjacent to the project or within the boundaries of the structure or fill. This NWP also authorizes the repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of those structures or fills destroyed or damaged by storms, floods, fire or other discrete events, provided the repair, rehabilitation, or replacement is commenced, or is under contract to commence, within two years of the date of their destruction or damage. In cases of catastrophic events, such as hurricanes or tornadoes, this two-year limit may be waived by the district engineer, provided the permittee can demonstrate funding, contract, or other similar delays.

(b) This NWP also authorizes the removal of accumulated sediments and debris in the vicinity of existing structures (e.g., bridges, culverted road crossings, water intake structures, etc.) and/or the placement of

new or additional riprap to protect the structure. The removal of sediment is limited to the minimum necessary to restore the waterway in the vicinity of the structure to the approximate dimensions that existed when the structure was built, but cannot extend farther than 200 feet in any direction from the structure. This 200 foot limit does not apply to maintenance dredging to remove accumulated sediments blocking or restricting outfall and intake structures or to maintenance dredging to remove accumulated sediments from canals associated with outfall and intake structures. All dredged or excavated materials must be deposited and retained in an area that has no waters of the United States unless otherwise specifically approved by the district engineer under separate authorization. The placement of new or additional riprap must be the minimum necessary to protect the structure or to ensure the safety of the structure. Any bank stabilization measures not directly associated with the structure will require a separate authorization from the district engineer.

(c) This NWP also authorizes temporary structures, fills, and work necessary to conduct the maintenance activity. Appropriate measures must be taken to maintain normal downstream flows and minimize flooding to the maximum extent practicable, when temporary structures, work, and discharges, including cofferdams, are necessary for construction activities, access fills, or dewatering of construction sites. Temporary fills must consist of materials, and be placed in a manner, that will not be eroded by expected high flows. Temporary fills must be removed in their entirety and the affected areas returned to pre-construction elevations. The areas affected by temporary fills must be revegetated, as appropriate.

(d) This NWP does not authorize maintenance dredging for the primary purpose of navigation. This NWP does not authorize beach restoration. This NWP does not authorize new stream channelization or stream relocation projects.

Notification: For activities authorized by paragraph (b) of this NWP, the permittee must submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer prior to commencing the activity (see general condition 31). The pre-construction notification must include information regarding the original design capacities and configurations of the outfalls, intakes, small impoundments, and canals. (Sections 10 and 404)

Note: This NWP authorizes the repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of any previously authorized structure or fill that does not qualify for the Clean Water Act Section 404(f) exemption for maintenance.

**NWP #13. Bank Stabilization:** This NWP authorizes Bank stabilization activities necessary for erosion prevention, provided the activity meets all of the following criteria:

- (a) No material is placed in excess of the minimum needed for erosion protection;
- (b) The activity is no more than 500 feet in length along the bank, unless the district engineer waives this criterion by making a written determination concluding that the discharge will result in minimal adverse effects;
- (c) The activity will not exceed an average of one cubic yard per running foot placed along the bank below the plane of the ordinary high water mark or the high tide line, unless the district engineer waives this criterion by making a written determination concluding that the discharge will result in minimal adverse effects;
- (d) The activity does not involve discharges of dredged or fill material into special aquatic sites, unless the district engineer waives this criterion by making a written determination concluding that the discharge will result in minimal adverse effects;
- (e) No material is of a type, or is placed in any location, or in any manner, that will impair surface water flow into or out of any waters of the United States;

- (f) No material is placed in a manner that will be eroded by normal or expected high flows (properly anchored trees and treetops may be used in low energy areas); and,
- (g) The activity is not a stream channelization activity.

This NWP also authorizes temporary structures, fills, and work necessary to construct the bank stabilization activity. Appropriate measures must be taken to maintain normal downstream flows and minimize flooding to the maximum extent practicable, when temporary structures, work, and discharges, including cofferdams, are necessary for construction activities, access fills, or dewatering of construction sites. Temporary fills must consist of materials, and be placed in a manner, that will not be eroded by expected high flows. Temporary fills must be removed in their entirety and the affected areas returned to pre-construction elevations. The areas affected by temporary fills must be revegetated, as appropriate. Invasive plant species shall not be used for bioengineering or vegetative bank stabilization.

Notification: The permittee must submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer prior to commencing the activity if the bank stabilization activity:

- (1) involves discharges into special aquatic sites; or
- (2) is in excess of 500 feet in length; or
- (3) will involve the discharge of greater than an average of one cubic yard per running foot along the bank below the plane of the ordinary high water mark or the high tide line. (See general condition 31.) (Sections 10 and 404)

**NWP #18. Minor Discharges:** This NWP authorizes minor discharges of dredged or fill material into all waters of the United States, provided the activity meets all of the following criteria:

- (a) The quantity of discharged material and the volume of area excavated do not exceed 25 cubic yards below the plane of the ordinary high water mark or the high tide line;
- (b) The discharge will not cause the loss of more than 1/10-acre of waters of the United States; and
- (c) The discharge is not placed for the purpose of a stream diversion.

Notification: The permittee must submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer prior to commencing the activity if:

- (1) The discharge or the volume of area excavated exceeds 10 cubic yards below the plane of the ordinary high water mark or the high tide line, or
- (2) the discharge is in a special aquatic site, including wetlands. (See general condition 31.) (Sections 10 and 404)

**NWP #33. Temporary Construction, Access, and Dewatering:** This NWP authorizes temporary structures, work, and discharges, including cofferdams, necessary for construction activities or access fills or dewatering of construction sites, provided that the associated primary activity is authorized by the Corps of Engineers or the U.S. Coast Guard. This NWP also authorizes temporary structures, work, and discharges, including cofferdams, necessary for construction activities not otherwise subject to the Corps or U.S. Coast Guard permit requirements. Appropriate measures must be taken to maintain near normal downstream flows and to minimize flooding. Fill must consist of materials, and be placed in a manner, that will not be eroded by expected high flows. The use of dredged material may be allowed if the district engineer determines that it will not cause more than minimal adverse effects on aquatic resources. Following completion of construction, temporary fill must be entirely removed to an area that has no waters of the United States, dredged material must be returned to its original location, and the affected areas must be restored to pre-construction elevations. The affected areas must also be revegetated, as

appropriate. This permit does not authorize the use of cofferdams to dewater wetlands or other aquatic areas to change their use. Structures left in place after construction is completed require a separate Section 10 permit if located in navigable waters of the United States. (See 33 CFR part 322.)

Notification: The permittee must submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer prior to commencing the activity (see general condition 31). The pre-construction notification must include a restoration plan showing how all temporary fills and structures will be removed and the area restored to pre-project conditions. (Sections 10 and 404)

**NWP #45. Repair of Uplands Damaged by Discrete Events:** This NWP authorizes discharges of dredged or fill material, including dredging or excavation, into all waters of the United States for activities associated with the restoration of upland areas damaged by storms, floods, or other discrete events. This NWP authorizes bank stabilization to protect the restored uplands. The restoration of the damaged areas, including any bank stabilization, must not exceed the contours, or ordinary high water mark, that existed before the damage occurred. The district engineer retains the right to determine the extent of the pre-existing conditions and the extent of any restoration work authorized by this NWP. The work must commence, or be under contract to commence, within two years of the date of damage, unless this condition is waived in writing by the district engineer. This NWP cannot be used to reclaim lands lost to normal erosion processes over an extended period.

This NWP does not authorize beach restoration or nourishment.

Minor dredging is limited to the amount necessary to restore the damaged upland area and should not significantly alter the pre-existing bottom contours of the waterbody.

Notification: The permittee must submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer (see general condition 31) within 12-months of the date of the damage. The pre-construction notification should include documentation, such as a recent topographic survey or photographs, to justify the extent of the proposed restoration. (Sections 10 and 404)

Note: The uplands themselves that are lost as a result of a storm, flood, or other discrete event can be replaced without a section 404 permit, if the uplands are restored to the ordinary high water mark (in non-tidal waters) or high tide line (in tidal waters). (See also 33 CFR 328.5.) This NWP authorizes discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States associated with the restoration of uplands.

## Applicable Regional Conditions

**1. Conditions for Waters Containing Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) Beds:** This condition applies to: NWP 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 44, 45, 48 and 52. A pre-construction notification (PCN) is required if work will occur in areas that contain submerged aquatic vegetation (SAVs). Information about SAVs can be found at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science's website <http://www.vims.edu/bio/sav/>. Additional avoidance and minimization measures, such as relocating a structure or time-of-year (TOYR) restrictions may be required to reduce impacts to SAVs.

**2. Conditions for Anadromous Fish Use Areas:** To ensure that activities authorized by ALL Nationwide Permits do not impact waterways documented to provide spawning habitat or a migratory pathway for anadromous fish, a check for anadromous fish use areas must be conducted via the Norfolk District's Regulatory GIS (for reporting permits) and/or the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) Information System (by applicant for non-reporting permits) at <http://vafwis.org/fwis/>. If the project is located in an area documented as an anadromous fish use area (confirmed or potential), a time-of-year restriction (TOYR) prohibiting all in-water work will be required from February 15 to June 30 of any given year or any TOYR specified by VDGIF and/or Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC). For permits requiring a PCN, if the Norfolk District determines that the work is minimal and the TOYR is unnecessary, informal consultation will be conducted with NOAA Fisheries Service (NOAA) to obtain concurrence that the TOYR would not be required for the proposed activity.

**3. Conditions for Designated Critical Resource Waters, which include National Estuarine Research Reserves:** Notification is required for work under NWP 3, 8, 10, 13, 15, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, 36, 37, and 38 in the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Virginia. This multi-site system along a salinity gradient of the York River includes Sweet Hall Marsh, Taskinas Creek, Catlett Island, and Goodwin Islands. More information can be found at: <http://www.vims.edu/cbnerf/>. NWP 7, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21, 29, 31, 35, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 49, 50, 51, and 52 cannot be used to authorize the discharge of dredged or fill material in the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Virginia.

**4. Conditions for Federally Listed Species and Designated Critical Habitat:** Notification for ALL NWP 1s will be required for any project that may affect a federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has developed an online system that allows users to find information about sensitive resources that may occur within the vicinity of a proposed project. This system is named "Information, Planning and Conservation System," (IPaC), and is located at: <http://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>. This system provides information regarding federally listed and proposed candidate, threatened, and endangered species, designated critical habitats, and Service refuges that may occur in the identified areas, or may be affected by the proposed activities. The applicant may use this system to determine if any federally listed species or designated critical habitat may be affected by their proposed project, ensuring compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

**5. Conditions for Waters with Federally Listed Endangered or Threatened Species, Waters Federally Designated as Critical Habitat, and One-mile Upstream (including tributaries) of Any Such Waters:**

A pre-construction notification (PCN) is required for work in the areas listed below for NWP's 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49, and 50 for the Counties of Lee, Russell, Scott, Tazewell, Wise, and Washington in Southwestern Virginia within the following specific waters and reaches:

1. Powell River - from the Tennessee-Virginia state line upstream to the Route 58 Bridge in Big Stone Gap and one mile upstream of the mouth of any tributary adjacent to this portion of the River.
2. Clinch River - from the Tennessee-Virginia state line upstream to Route 632 at Pisgah in Tazewell County and one mile upstream of the mouth of any tributary adjacent to this portion of the River, the Little River to its confluence with Maiden Spring Creek, and one mile upstream of the mouth of any tributary adjacent to this portion of Little River.
3. North Fork Holston River - from the Tennessee-Virginia state line upstream to the Smyth County/Bland County line and one mile upstream of any tributary adjacent to this portion of the River.
4. Copper Creek - from its junction with the Clinch River upstream to the Route 58 bridge at Dickensonville in Russell County and one mile upstream of any tributary adjacent to this portion of the Creek.
5. Indian Creek - from its junction with the Clinch River upstream to the fourth Norfolk and Western Railroad bridge at Van Dyke in Tazewell County and one mile upstream of the mouth of any tributary adjacent to this portion of the Creek.
6. Middle Fork Holston River - from the Tennessee-Virginia state line to its junction with Walker Creek in Smyth County near Marion, Virginia.
7. South Fork Holston River - from its junction with Middle Fork Holston River upstream to its junction with Beech Creek in Washington County. For the above listed NWP's that require a PCN to work in specific waters and reaches, as described above, in the counties of Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Wise, and Washington in southwestern Virginia, it is recommended that the prospective permittee first contact the applicable Norfolk District Field Office, found at this web link: [http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/Regulatory\\_Branch/contact\\_geo\\_southwest.asp](http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/Regulatory_Branch/contact_geo_southwest.asp), to determine if the PCN procedures would apply. If required, the PCN must be submitted in writing and include the following information (the Joint Permit Application may also be used – be sure to mark it with the letters PCN at the top of the first page):

- i. Name, address, and telephone number of the prospective permittee.
- ii. Location of the proposed project.
- iii. Vicinity map and project drawings on 8.5-inch by 11-inch paper (including a plan view, profile, & cross-sectional view).
- iv. Brief description of the proposed project and the project purpose.
- v. Where required by the terms of the NWP, a delineation of affected special aquatic sites, including wetlands.

When all required information is received by the appropriate field office, the Corps will notify the prospective permittee within 45 days whether the project may proceed under the NWP permit or whether an individual permit is required. If, after reviewing the notification, the District Commander determines that the proposed activity would have more than a minimal individual or cumulative adverse impact on the aquatic environment or otherwise may be contrary to the public interest, then he/she will either condition the nationwide permit authorization to reduce or eliminate the adverse impacts, or notify the prospective permittee that the activity is not authorized by the nationwide permit and provide the prospective permittee with instructions on how to seek authorization under an individual permit.

Non-federal applicants shall notify the District Commander if any listed species or designated critical habitat might be affected or is in the vicinity of the project, or if the project is located in designated critical habitat, and shall not begin work on the activity until notified by the District Commander that the requirements of the ESA have been satisfied and that the activity is authorized. For activities that might affect Federally-listed endangered or threatened species or designated critical habitat, the PCN must include the name(s) of the endangered or threatened species that may be affected by the proposed work or that utilize the designated critical habitat that may be affected by the proposed work. The District Commander will determine whether the proposed activity “may affect” or will have “no effect” to listed species and designated critical habitat and will notify the non-Federal applicant of the Corps’ determination within 45 days of receipt of a complete PCN. In cases where the non-Federal applicant has identified listed species or critical habitat that might be affected or is in the vicinity of the project, and has so notified the Corps, the applicant shall not begin work until the Corps has provided notification the proposed activities will have “no effect” on listed species or critical habitat, or until Section 7 consultation has been completed.

**6. Conditions for Designated Trout Waters:** Notification is required for work in the areas listed below for NWP 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49, and 50. This condition applies to activities occurring in two categories of waters; Class V (Put and Take Trout Waters) and Class VI (Natural Trout Waters), as defined by the Virginia State Water Control Board Regulations, Water Quality Standards (VR-680-21-00), dated January 1, 1991, or the most recently updated publication. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) designated these same trout streams into six classes. Classes I-IV are considered wild trout streams. Classes V and VI are considered stockable trout streams. Information on designated trout streams can be obtained via their Virginia Fish and Wildlife Information Service's (VAFWIS's) Cold Water Stream Survey database. Basic access to the VAFWIS is available via <http://vafwis.org/fwis/>. The waters, occurring specifically within the mountains of Virginia, are within the following river basins:

- a. Potomac-Shenandoah River Basins
- b. James River Basin
- c. Roanoke River Basin
- d. New River Basin
- e. Tennessee and Big Sandy River Basins
- f. Rappahannock River Basin

VDGIF recommends the following time-of-year restrictions (TOYR) for any in-stream work within streams identified as wild trout waters in its Cold Water Stream Survey database. The recommended TOYR for trout species are: 1) Brook Trout: October 1 through March 31, 2) Brown Trout: October 1 through March 31, and 3) Rainbow Trout: March 15 through May 15.

This condition applies to the following counties and cities: Albemarle, Allegheny, Amherst, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Bristol, Buchanan, Buena Vista, Carroll, Clarke, Covington, Craig, Dickenson, Floyd, Franklin, Frederick, Giles, Grayson, Greene, Henry, Highland, Lee, Loudoun, Madison, Montgomery, Nelson, Page, Patrick, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Roanoke City, Roanoke Co., Rockbridge, Rockingham, Russell, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth, Staunton, Tazewell, Warren, Washington, Waynesboro, Wise, and Wythe.

Any discharge of dredged and/or fill material authorized by the NWPs listed above, which would occur in the designated waterways or adjacent wetlands of the specified counties, requires notification to the appropriate Corps of Engineers field office, and written approval from that office prior to performing the work. The Norfolk District recommends that prospective permittees first contact the appropriate field

office by telephone to determine if the notification procedures would apply. The notification must be in writing and include the following information (the standard Joint Permit Application may also be used):

- i. Name, address, and telephone number of the prospective permittee.
- ii. Location of the proposed project.
- iii. Vicinity map and project drawings on 8.5-inch by 11-inch paper (plan view, profile, & cross-sectional view).
- iv. Brief description of the proposed project and the project purpose.
- v. Where required by the terms of the nationwide permit, a delineation of affected special aquatic sites, including wetlands.

When all required information is received by the appropriate field office, the Corps will notify the prospective permittee within 45 days whether the project can proceed under the NWP or whether an individual permit is required. If, after reviewing the notification, the District Commander determines that the proposed activity would have more than minimal individual or cumulative adverse impacts on the aquatic environment or otherwise may be contrary to the public interest, then he/she will either condition the nationwide permit authorization to reduce or eliminate the adverse impacts, or notify the prospective permittee that the activity is not authorized by the NWP and provide instructions on how to seek authorization under an individual permit. If the prospective permittee is not notified otherwise within the 45-day period the prospective permittee may assume that the project can proceed under the NWP.

**7. Conditions Regarding Invasive Species:** Plant species listed by the most current *Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Invasive Alien Plant List* shall not be used for re-vegetation for activities authorized by any NWP. The list of invasive plants in Virginia may be found at: [http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural\\_heritage/documents/invlist.pdf](http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/documents/invlist.pdf).

**8. Conditions Pertaining to Countersinking of Pipes and Culverts in Nontidal Waters** This condition applies to: NWPs 3, 7, 12, 14, 17, 18, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49, and 50. **NOTE: COUNTERSINKING IS NOT REQUIRED IN TIDAL WATERS.** However, replacement pipes/culverts in tidal waters must be installed with invert elevations no higher than the existing pipe/culvert invert elevation, and a new pipe/culvert must be installed with the invert no higher than the stream bottom elevation.

a. Following consultation with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF), the Norfolk District has determined that fish and other aquatic organisms are most likely present in any stream being crossed, in the absence of site-specific evidence to the contrary. Although prospective permittees have the option of providing such evidence, extensive efforts to collect such information is not encouraged, since countersinking will in most cases be required except as outlined in the conditions below.

b. All pipes: All pipes and culverts placed in streams will be countersunk at both the inlet and outlet ends, unless indicated otherwise by the Norfolk District on a case-by-case basis (see below). Pipes that are 24" or less in diameter shall be countersunk 3" below the natural stream bottom. Pipes that are greater than 24" in diameter shall be countersunk 6" below the natural stream bottom. The countersinking requirement does not apply to bottomless pipes/culverts or pipe arches. All single pipes or culverts (with bottoms) shall be depressed (countersunk) below the natural streambed at both the inlet and outlet of the structure. In sets of multiple pipes or culverts (with bottoms) at least one pipe or culvert shall be depressed (countersunk) at both the inlet and outlet to convey low flows.

c. Exemption for extensions and certain maintenance: The requirement to countersink does not apply to extensions of existing pipes or culverts that are not countersunk, or to maintenance to pipes/culverts that does not involve replacing the pipe/culvert (such as repairing cracks, adding material to prevent/correct scour, etc.).

d. Floodplain pipes: The requirement to countersink does not apply to pipes or culverts that are being placed above ordinary high water, such as those placed to allow for floodplain flows. The placement of pipes above ordinary high water is not jurisdictional (provided no fill is discharged into wetlands).

e. Hydraulic opening: Pipes should be adequately sized to allow for the passage of ordinary high water with the countersinking and invert restrictions taken into account.

f. Pipes on bedrock or above existing utility lines: Different procedures will be followed for pipes or culverts to be placed on bedrock or above existing buried utility lines where it is not practicable to relocate the lines, depending on whether the work is for replacement of an existing pipe/culvert or a new pipe/culvert:

i. Replacement of an existing pipe/culvert: Countersinking is not required provided the elevations of the inlet and outlet ends of the replacement pipe/culvert are no higher above the stream bottom than those of the existing pipe/culvert. Documentation (photographic or other evidence) must be maintained in the permittee's records showing the bedrock condition and the existing inlet and outlet elevations. That documentation will be available to the Norfolk District upon request, but notification or coordination with the Norfolk District is not otherwise required.

ii. A pipe/culvert is being placed in a new location: If the prospective permittee determines that bedrock or an existing buried utility line that is not practicable to relocate prevents countersinking, he/she should evaluate the use of a bottomless pipe/culvert, bottomless utility vault, span (bridge) or other bottomless structure to cross the waterway, and also evaluate alternative locations for the new pipe/culvert that will allow for countersinking. If the prospective permittee determines that neither a bottomless structure nor an alternative location is practicable, then he/she must submit a pre-construction notification (PCN) to the Norfolk District in accordance with General Condition 31 of the NWPs. In addition to the information required by General Condition 31, the prospective permittee must provide documentation of measures evaluated to minimize disruption of the movement of aquatic life as well as documentation of the cost, engineering factors, and site conditions that prohibit countersinking the pipe/culvert. Options that must be considered include partial countersinking (such as less than 3" of countersinking, or countersinking of one end of the pipe), and constructing stone step pools, low rock weirs downstream, or other measures to provide for the movement of aquatic organisms. The PCN must also include photographs documenting site conditions. The prospective permittee may find it helpful to contact his/her regional fishery biologist for the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF), for recommendations about the measures to be taken to allow for fish movements. When seeking advice from VDGIF, the prospective permittee should provide the VDGIF biologist with all available information such as location, flow rates, stream bottom features, description of proposed pipe(s), slopes, etc. Any recommendations from VDGIF should be included in the PCN. The Norfolk District will notify the prospective permittee whether the proposed work qualifies for the nationwide permit within 45 days of receipt of a complete PCN. NOTE: Blasting of stream bottoms through the use of explosives is not acceptable as a means of providing for countersinking of pipes on bedrock.

g. Pipes on steep terrain: Pipes being placed on steep terrain (slope of 5% or greater) must be countersunk in accordance with the conditions above and will in most cases be nonreporting. It is recommended that on slopes greater than 5%, a larger pipe than required be installed to allow for the passage of ordinary high water in order to increase the likelihood that natural velocities can be maintained. There may be situations where countersinking both the inlet and outlet may result in a slope in the pipe that results in flow velocities that cause excessive scour at the outlet and/or prohibit some

fish movement. This type of situation could occur on the side of a mountain where falls and drop pools occur along a stream. Should this be the case, or should the prospective permittee not want to countersink the pipe/culvert for other reasons, he/she must submit a Pre-Construction Notification to the Norfolk District in accordance with General Condition 31 of the Nationwide Permits. In addition to the information required by General Condition 31, the prospective permittee must provide documentation of measures evaluated to minimize disruption of the movement of aquatic life as well as documentation of the cost, engineering factors, and site conditions that prohibit countersinking the pipe/culvert. The prospective permittee should design the pipe to be placed at a slope as steep as stream characteristics allow, countersink the inlet 3-6", and implement measures to minimize any disruption of fish movement. These measures can include constructing a stone step/pool structure, preferably using river rock/native stone rather than riprap, constructing low rock weirs to create a pool or pools, or other structures to allow for fish movements in both directions. Stone structures should be designed with sufficient-sized stone to prevent erosion or washout and should include keying-in as appropriate. These structures should be designed both to allow for fish passage and to minimize scour at the outlet. The quantities of fill discharged below ordinary high water necessary to comply with these requirements (i.e., the cubic yards of stone, riprap or other fill placed below the plane of ordinary high water) must be included in project totals. The prospective permittee may find it helpful to contact his/her regional fishery biologist for the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF), for recommendations about the measures to be taken to allow for fish movements. When seeking advice from DGIF, the prospective permittee should provide the DGIF biologist with all available information such as location, flow rates, stream bottom features, description of proposed pipe(s), slopes, etc. Any recommendations from DGIF should be included in the PCN. The Norfolk District will notify the prospective permittee whether the proposed work qualifies for the nationwide permit within 45 days of receipt of a complete PCN.

h. Problems encountered during construction: When a pipe/culvert is being replaced, and the design calls for countersinking at both ends of the pipe/culvert, and during construction it is found that the streambed/banks are on bedrock, then the permittee must stop work and contact the Norfolk District (contact by telephone and/or email is acceptable). The permittee must provide the Norfolk District with specific information concerning site conditions and limitations on countersinking. The Norfolk District will work with the permittee to determine an acceptable plan, taking into consideration the information provided by the permittee, but the permittee should recognize that the Norfolk District could determine that the work will not qualify for a nationwide permit.

i. Emergency pipe replacements: In the case of an emergency situation, such as when a pipe/culvert washes out during a flood, a permittee is encouraged to countersink the replacement pipe at the time of replacement, in accordance with the conditions above. However, if conditions or timeframes do not allow for countersinking, then the pipe can be replaced as it was before the washout, but the permittee will have to come back and replace the pipe/culvert and countersink it in accordance with the guidance above. In other words, the replacement of the washed out pipe is viewed as a temporary repair, and a countersunk replacement should be made at the earliest possible date. The Norfolk District must be notified of all pipes/culverts that are replaced without countersinking at the time that it occurs, even if it is an otherwise non-reporting activity, and must provide the permittee's planned schedule for installing a countersunk replacement (it is acceptable to submit such notification by email). The permittee should anticipate whether bedrock or steep terrain will limit countersinking, and if so, should follow the procedures outlined in (f) and/or (g) above.

**9. Conditions for the Repair of Pipes:** This condition applies to: NWP's 3, 7, 12, 14, 17, 18, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 32, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49, and 50. **NOTE: COUNTERSINKING IS NOT REQUIRED IN TIDAL WATERS.** However, replacement pipes/culverts in tidal waters must be installed with invert elevations no higher than the existing pipe/culvert invert elevation, and a new

pipe/culvert must be installed with the invert no higher than the stream bottom elevation. If any discharge of fill material will occur in conjunction with pipe maintenance, such as concrete being pumped over rebar into an existing deteriorated pipe for stabilization, then:

A. If the existing pipe or line of pipes are NOT currently countersunk:

a. As long as the inlet and outlet invert elevations of at least one pipe located in the low flow channel are not being altered, and provided that no concrete apron is being constructed, then the work may proceed under the NWP for the other pipes, provided it complies with all other NWP General Conditions, including Condition 9 for Management of Water Flows. In such cases, notification to the Norfolk District Commander is not required, unless specified in the NWP Conditions for other reasons, and the permittee may proceed with the work.

b. Otherwise, the prospective permittee must submit a pre-construction notification (PCN) to the Norfolk District Commander prior to commencing the activity. For all such projects, the following information should be provided:

A. Photographs of the existing inlet and outlet;

B. A measurement of the degree to which the work will raise the invert elevations of both the inlet and outlet of the existing pipe;

C. The reasons why other methods of pipe maintenance are not practicable (such as metal sleeves or a countersunk pipe replacement);

D. Depending on the specific case, the Norfolk District may discuss potential fish usage of the waterway with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The Norfolk District will assess all such pipe repair proposals in accordance with guidelines that can be found under “Pipe Repair Guidelines” at:

[http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/technical%20services/Regulatory%20branch/Guidance/guidance\\_documents.asp](http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/technical%20services/Regulatory%20branch/Guidance/guidance_documents.asp)

c. If the Norfolk District determines that the work qualifies for the NWP, additional conditions will be placed on the verification. Those conditions can be found at the web link above (in item ii).

d. If the Norfolk District determines that the work does NOT qualify for the NWP, the applicant will be directed to apply for either an LOP-1 permit (applicable only for Virginia Department of Transportation projects) or an individual permit. However, it is anticipated that the applicant will still be required to perform the work such that the waterway is not blocked or restricted to a greater degree than its current conditions.

B. If the existing pipe or at least one pipe in the line of pipes IS countersunk and at least one pipe located in the low flow channel will continue to be countersunk, and no concrete aprons are proposed: No PCN to the Norfolk District is required, unless specified in the NWP Conditions for other reasons, and the permittee may proceed with the work.

C. If the existing pipe or at least one pipe in the line of pipes IS countersunk and no pipe will continue to be countersunk in the low flow channel: This work cannot be performed under the NWPs. The prospective permittee must apply for either a Letter of Permission 1 (LOP-1) permit (applicable only for VDOT projects) or an individual permit. However, it is anticipated that the prospective permittee will still be required to perform the work such that the waterway is not blocked or restricted more so than its current conditions.

D. Emergency situations: In the case of an emergency situation, a prospective permittee is encouraged to follow the above guidelines at the time of repair. However, if conditions or timeframes do not allow for compliance with the procedure outlined herein, then the pipe can be repaired as it was

before the washout, but the prospective permittee will have to come back and replace or reconstruct the pipe/culvert in accordance with these guidelines. In other words, the repair of the pipe is viewed as a temporary fix, and an appropriate repair should be made at the earliest possible date. The Norfolk District must be notified of all pipes/culverts that are repaired without compliance with these guidelines at the time that the repair occurs, even if it is an otherwise non-reporting activity, and that notification must provide the prospective permittee's planned schedule for following these procedures and constructing an appropriate repair (it is acceptable to submit such notification by email).

### **Nationwide Permit General Conditions**

Note: To qualify for NWP authorization, the prospective permittee must comply with the following general conditions, as appropriate, in addition to any regional or case-specific conditions imposed by the division engineer or district engineer. Prospective permittees should contact the appropriate Corps district office to determine if regional conditions have been imposed on an NWP. Prospective permittees should also contact the appropriate Corps district office to determine the status of Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification and/or Coastal Zone Management Act consistency for an NWP.

1. **Navigation.** (a) No activity may cause more than a minimal adverse effect on navigation.  
(b) Any safety lights and signals prescribed by the U.S. Coast Guard, through regulations or otherwise, must be installed and maintained at the permittee's expense on authorized facilities in navigable waters of the United States.  
(c) The permittee understands and agrees that, if future operations by the United States require the removal, relocation, or other alteration, of the structure or work herein authorized, or if, in the opinion of the Secretary of the Army or his authorized representative, said structure or work shall cause unreasonable obstruction to the free navigation of the navigable waters, the permittee will be required, upon due notice from the Corps of Engineers, to remove, relocate, or alter the structural work or obstructions caused thereby, without expense to the United States. No claim shall be made against the United States on account of any such removal or alteration.
2. **Aquatic Life Movements.** No activity may substantially disrupt the necessary life cycle movements of those species of aquatic life indigenous to the waterbody, including those species that normally migrate through the area, unless the activity's primary purpose is to impound water. Culverts placed in streams must be installed to maintain low flow conditions.
3. **Spawning Areas.** Activities in spawning areas during spawning seasons must be avoided to the maximum extent practicable. Activities that result in the physical destruction (e.g., through excavation, fill, or downstream smothering by substantial turbidity) of an important spawning area are not authorized.
4. **Migratory Bird Breeding Areas.** Activities in waters of the United States that serve as breeding areas for migratory birds must be avoided to the maximum extent practicable.
5. **Shellfish Beds.** No activity may occur in areas of concentrated shellfish populations, unless the activity is directly related to a shellfish harvesting activity authorized by NWPs 4 and 48.
6. **Suitable Material.** No activity may use unsuitable material (e.g., trash, debris, car bodies, asphalt, etc.). Material used for construction or discharged must be free from toxic pollutants in toxic amounts (see Section 307 of the Clean Water Act).
7. **Water Supply Intakes.** No activity may occur in the proximity of a public water supply intake, except where the activity is for the repair or improvement of public water supply intake structures or adjacent bank stabilization.

8. **Adverse Effects From Impoundments.** If the activity creates an impoundment of water, adverse effects to the aquatic system due to accelerating the passage of water, and/or restricting its flow must be minimized to the maximum extent practicable.
9. **Management of Water Flows.** To the maximum extent practicable, the pre-construction course, condition, capacity, and location of open waters must be maintained for each activity, including stream channelization and storm water management activities, except as provided below. The activity must be constructed to withstand expected high flows. The activity must not restrict or impede the passage of normal or high flows, unless the primary purpose of the activity is to impound water or manage high flows. The activity may alter the pre-construction course, condition, capacity, and location of open waters if it benefits the aquatic environment (e.g., stream restoration or relocation activities).
10. **Fills Within 100-Year Floodplains.** The activity must comply with applicable FEMA-approved state or local floodplain management requirements.
11. **Equipment.** Heavy equipment working in wetlands or mudflats must be placed on mats, or other measures must be taken to minimize soil disturbance.
12. **Soil Erosion and Sediment Controls.** Appropriate soil erosion and sediment controls must be used and maintained in effective operating condition during construction, and all exposed soil and other fills, as well as any work below the ordinary high water mark or high tide line, must be permanently stabilized at the earliest practicable date. Permittees are encouraged to perform work within waters of the United States during periods of low-flow or no-flow.
13. **Removal of Temporary Fills.** Temporary fills must be removed in their entirety and the affected areas returned to pre-construction elevations. The affected areas must be revegetated, as appropriate.
14. **Proper Maintenance.** Any authorized structure or fill shall be properly maintained, including maintenance to ensure public safety.
15. **Wild and Scenic Rivers.** No activity may occur in a component of the National Wild and Scenic River System, or in a river officially designated by Congress as a “study river” for possible inclusion in the system while the river is in an official study status, unless the appropriate Federal agency with direct management responsibility for such river, has determined in writing that the proposed activity will not adversely affect the Wild and Scenic River designation or study status. Information on Wild and Scenic Rivers may be obtained from the appropriate Federal land management agency in the area (e.g., National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).
16. **Tribal Rights.** No activity or its operation may impair reserved tribal rights, including, but not limited to, reserved water rights and treaty fishing and hunting rights.
17. **Endangered Species.** (a) No activity is authorized under any NWP which is likely to jeopardize the continued existence of a threatened or endangered species or a species proposed for such designation, as identified under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), or which will destroy or adversely modify the critical habitat of such species. No activity is authorized under any NWP which “may affect” a listed species or critical habitat, unless Section 7 consultation addressing the effects of the proposed activity has been completed.
  - (b) Federal agencies should follow their own procedures for complying with the requirements of the ESA. Federal permittees must provide the district engineer with the appropriate documentation to demonstrate compliance with those requirements.
  - (c) Non-federal permittees shall notify the district engineer if any listed species or designated critical habitat might be affected or is in the vicinity of the project, or if the project is located in designated critical habitat, and shall not begin work on the activity until notified by the district engineer that the requirements of the ESA have been satisfied and that the activity is authorized. For activities that might affect Federally-listed endangered or threatened species or designated critical habitat, the pre-construction notification must include the name(s) of the endangered or threatened species that may be affected by the proposed work or that utilize the designated critical habitat that may be affected by the proposed work. The district engineer will determine whether the proposed activity “may affect” or will

have “no effect” to listed species and designated critical habitat and will notify the non-Federal applicant of the Corps’ determination within 45 days of receipt of a complete pre-construction notification. In cases where the non-Federal applicant has identified listed species or critical habitat that might be affected or is in the vicinity of the project, and has so notified the Corps, the applicant shall not begin work until the Corps has provided notification the proposed activities will have “no effect” on listed species or critical habitat, or until Section 7 consultation has been completed.

(d) As a result of formal or informal consultation with the FWS or NMFS the district engineer may add species-specific regional endangered species conditions to the NWP.

(e) Authorization of an activity by a NWP does not authorize the “take” of a threatened or endangered species as defined under the ESA. In the absence of separate authorization (e.g., an ESA Section 10 Permit, a Biological Opinion with “incidental take” provisions, etc.) from the U.S. FWS or the NMFS, both lethal and non-lethal “takes” of protected species are in violation of the ESA.

(f) Information on the location of threatened and endangered species and their critical habitat can be obtained directly from the offices of the U.S. FWS and NMFS or their world wide Web pages at <http://www.fws.gov/> and <http://www.noaa.gov/fisheries.html> respectively.

**18. Historic Properties.** (a) In cases where the district engineer determines that the activity may affect properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places, the activity is not authorized, until the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) have been satisfied.

(b) Federal permittees should follow their own procedures for complying with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Federal permittees must provide the district engineer with the appropriate documentation to demonstrate compliance with those requirements.

(c) Non-federal permittees must submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer if the authorized activity may have the potential to cause effects to any historic properties listed, determined to be eligible for listing on, or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, including previously unidentified properties. For such activities, the pre-construction notification must state which historic properties may be affected by the proposed work or include a vicinity map indicating the location of the historic properties or the potential for the presence of historic properties. Assistance regarding information on the location of or potential for the presence of historic resources can be sought from the State Historic Preservation Officer or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, as appropriate, and the National Register of Historic Places (see 33 CFR 330.4(g)). The district engineer shall make a reasonable and good faith effort to carry out appropriate identification efforts, which may include background research, consultation, oral history interviews, sample field investigation, and field survey. Based on the information submitted and these efforts, the district engineer shall determine whether the proposed activity has the potential to cause an effect on the historic properties. Where the non-Federal applicant has identified historic properties which the activity may have the potential to cause effects and so notified the Corps, the non-Federal applicant shall not begin the activity until notified by the district engineer either that the activity has no potential to cause effects or that consultation under Section 106 of the NHPA has been completed.

(d) The district engineer will notify the prospective permittee within 45 days of receipt of a complete pre-construction notification whether NHPA Section 106 consultation is required. Section 106 consultation is not required when the Corps determines that the activity does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties (see 36 CFR §800.3(a)). If NHPA section 106 consultation is required and will occur, the district engineer will notify the non-Federal applicant that he or she cannot begin work until Section 106 consultation is completed.

(e) Prospective permittees should be aware that section 110k of the NHPA (16 U.S.C. 470h-2(k)) prevents the Corps from granting a permit or other assistance to an applicant who, with intent to avoid the requirements of Section 106 of the NHPA, has intentionally significantly adversely affected a historic property to which the permit would relate, or having legal power to prevent it, allowed such significant

adverse effect to occur, unless the Corps, after consultation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), determines that circumstances justify granting such assistance despite the adverse effect created or permitted by the applicant. If circumstances justify granting the assistance, the Corps is required to notify the ACHP and provide documentation specifying the circumstances, explaining the degree of damage to the integrity of any historic properties affected, and proposed mitigation. This documentation must include any views obtained from the applicant, SHPO/THPO, appropriate Indian tribes if the undertaking occurs on or affects historic properties on tribal lands or affects properties of interest to those tribes, and other parties known to have a legitimate interest in the impacts to the permitted activity on historic properties.

19. **Designated Critical Resource Waters.** Critical resource waters include, NOAA-designated marine sanctuaries, National Estuarine Research Reserves, state natural heritage sites, and outstanding national resource waters or other waters officially designated by a state as having particular environmental or ecological significance and identified by the district engineer after notice and opportunity for public comment. The district engineer may also designate additional critical resource waters after notice and opportunity for comment.

(a) Discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States are not authorized by NWP 7, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21, 29, 31, 35, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 49, and 50 for any activity within, or directly affecting, critical resource waters, including wetlands adjacent to such waters.

(b) For NWPs 3, 8, 10, 13, 15, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, 36, 37, and 38, notification is required in accordance with general condition 27, for any activity proposed in the designated critical resource waters including wetlands adjacent to those waters. The district engineer may authorize activities under these NWPs only after it is determined that the impacts to the critical resource waters will be no more than minimal.

20. **Mitigation.** The district engineer will consider the following factors when determining appropriate and practicable mitigation necessary to ensure that adverse effects on the aquatic environment are minimal:

(a) The activity must be designed and constructed to avoid and minimize adverse effects, both temporary and permanent, to waters of the United States to the maximum extent practicable at the project site (i.e., on site).

(b) Mitigation in all its forms (avoiding, minimizing, rectifying, reducing, or compensating) will be required to the extent necessary to ensure that the adverse effects to the aquatic environment are minimal.

(c) Compensatory mitigation at a minimum one-for-one ratio will be required for all wetland losses that exceed 1/10 acre and require pre-construction notification, unless the district engineer determines in writing that some other form of mitigation would be more environmentally appropriate and provides a project-specific waiver of this requirement. For wetland losses of 1/10 acre or less that require pre-construction notification, the district engineer may determine on a case-by-case basis that compensatory mitigation is required to ensure that the activity results in minimal adverse effects on the aquatic environment. Since the likelihood of success is greater and the impacts to potentially valuable uplands are reduced, wetland restoration should be the first compensatory mitigation option considered.

(d) For losses of streams or other open waters that require pre-construction notification, the district engineer may require compensatory mitigation, such as stream restoration, to ensure that the activity results in minimal adverse effects on the aquatic environment.

(e) Compensatory mitigation will not be used to increase the acreage losses allowed by the acreage limits of the NWPs. For example, if an NWP has an acreage limit of 1/2 acre, it cannot be used to authorize any project resulting in the loss of greater than 1/2 acre of waters of the United States, even if compensatory mitigation is provided that replaces or restores some of the lost waters. However, compensatory mitigation can and should be used, as necessary, to ensure that a project already meeting the established acreage limits also satisfies the minimal impact requirement associated with the NWPs.

(f) Compensatory mitigation plans for projects in or near streams or other open waters will normally include a requirement for the establishment, maintenance, and legal protection (e.g., conservation easements) of riparian areas next to open waters. In some cases, riparian areas may be the only compensatory mitigation required. Riparian areas should consist of native species. The width of the required riparian area will address documented water quality or aquatic habitat loss concerns. Normally, the riparian area will be 25 to 50 feet wide on each side of the stream, but the district engineer may require slightly wider riparian areas to address documented water quality or habitat loss concerns. Where both wetlands and open waters exist on the project site, the district engineer will determine the appropriate compensatory mitigation (e.g., riparian areas and/or wetlands compensation) based on what is best for the aquatic environment on a watershed basis. In cases where riparian areas are determined to be the most appropriate form of compensatory mitigation, the district engineer may waive or reduce the requirement to provide wetland compensatory mitigation for wetland losses.

(g) Permittees may propose the use of mitigation banks, in-lieu fee arrangements or separate activity-specific compensatory mitigation. In all cases, the mitigation provisions will specify the party responsible for accomplishing and/or complying with the mitigation plan.

(h) Where certain functions and services of waters of the United States are permanently adversely affected, such as the conversion of a forested or scrub-shrub wetland to a herbaceous wetland in a permanently maintained utility line right-of-way, mitigation may be required to reduce the adverse effects of the project to the minimal level.

21. **Water Quality.** Where States and authorized Tribes, or EPA where applicable, have not previously certified compliance of an NWP with CWA Section 401, individual 401 Water Quality Certification must be obtained or waived (see 33 CFR 330.4(c)). The district engineer or State or Tribe may require additional water quality management measures to ensure that the authorized activity does not result in more than minimal degradation of water quality.

22. **Coastal Zone Management.** In coastal states where an NWP has not previously received a state coastal zone management consistency concurrence, an individual state coastal zone management consistency concurrence must be obtained, or a presumption of concurrence must occur (see 33 CFR 330.4(d)). The district engineer or a State may require additional measures to ensure that the authorized activity is consistent with state coastal zone management requirements.

23. **Regional and Case-By-Case Conditions.** The activity must comply with any regional conditions that may have been added by the Division Engineer (see 33 CFR 330.4(e)) and with any case specific conditions added by the Corps or by the state, Indian Tribe, or U.S. EPA in its section 401 Water Quality Certification, or by the state in its Coastal Zone Management Act consistency determination.

24. **Use of Multiple Nationwide Permits.** The use of more than one NWP for a single and complete project is prohibited, except when the acreage loss of waters of the United States authorized by the NWPs does not exceed the acreage limit of the NWP with the highest specified acreage limit. For example, if a road crossing over tidal waters is constructed under NWP 14, with associated bank stabilization authorized by NWP 13, the maximum acreage loss of waters of the United States for the total project cannot exceed 1/3-acre.

25. **Transfer of Nationwide Permit Verifications.** If the permittee sells the property associated with a nationwide permit verification, the permittee may transfer the nationwide permit verification to the new owner by submitting a letter to the appropriate Corps district office to validate the transfer. A copy of the nationwide permit verification must be attached to the letter, and the letter must contain the following statement and signature:

“When the structures or work authorized by this nationwide permit are still in existence at the time the property is transferred, the terms and conditions of this nationwide permit, including any special conditions, will continue to be binding on the new owner(s) of the property. To validate the transfer of

this nationwide permit and the associated liabilities associated with compliance with its terms and conditions, have the transferee sign and date below.”

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(Transferee)

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(Date)

26. Compliance Certification. Each permittee who received an NWP verification from the Corps must submit a signed certification regarding the completed work and any required mitigation. The certification form must be forwarded by the Corps with the NWP verification letter and will include:

- (a) A statement that the authorized work was done in accordance with the NWP authorization, including any general or specific conditions;
- (b) A statement that any required mitigation was completed in accordance with the permit conditions; and
- (c) The signature of the permittee certifying the completion of the work and mitigation.

27. **Pre-Construction Notification**.

(a) Timing. Where required by the terms of the NWP, the prospective permittee must notify the district engineer by submitting a pre-construction notification (PCN) as early as possible. The district engineer must determine if the PCN is complete within 30 calendar days of the date of receipt and, as a general rule, will request additional information necessary to make the PCN complete only once. However, if the prospective permittee does not provide all of the requested information, then the district engineer will notify the prospective permittee that the PCN is still incomplete and the PCN review process will not commence until all of the requested information has been received by the district engineer. The prospective permittee shall not begin the activity:

(1) Until notified in writing by the district engineer that the activity may proceed under the NWP with any special conditions imposed by the district or division engineer; or

(2) If 45 calendar days have passed from the district engineer’s receipt of the complete PCN and the prospective permittee has not received written notice from the district or division engineer. However, if the permittee was required to notify the Corps pursuant to general condition 17 that listed species or critical habitat might be affected or in the vicinity of the project, or to notify the Corps pursuant to general condition 18 that the activity may have the potential to cause effects to historic properties, the permittee cannot begin the activity until receiving written notification from the Corps that is “no effect” on listed species or “no potential to cause effects” on historic properties, or that any consultation required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (see 33 CFR 330.4(f)) and/or Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation (see 33 CFR 330.4(g)) is completed. Also, work cannot begin under NWPs 21, 49, or 50 until the permittee has received written approval from the Corps. If the proposed activity requires a written waiver to exceed specified limits of an NWP, the permittee cannot begin the activity until the district engineer issues the waiver. If the district or division engineer notifies the permittee in writing that an individual permit is required within 45 calendar days of receipt of a complete PCN, the permittee cannot begin the activity until an individual permit has been obtained. Subsequently, the permittee’s right to proceed under the NWP may be modified, suspended, or revoked only in accordance with the procedure set forth in 33 CFR 330.5(d)(2).

(b) Contents of Pre-Construction Notification: The PCN must be in writing and include the following information:

- (1) Name, address and telephone numbers of the prospective permittee;
- (2) Location of the proposed project;
- (3) A description of the proposed project; the project’s purpose; direct and indirect adverse environmental effects the project would cause; any other NWP(s), regional general permit(s), or individual permit(s) used or intended to be used to authorize any part of the proposed project or any related activity. The description should be sufficiently detailed to allow the district engineer to determine

that the adverse effects of the project will be minimal and to determine the need for compensatory mitigation. Sketches should be provided when necessary to show that the activity complies with the terms of the NWP. (Sketches usually clarify the project and when provided result in a quicker decision.);

(4) The PCN must include a delineation of special aquatic sites and other waters of the United States on the project site. Wetland delineations must be prepared in accordance with the current method required by the Corps. The permittee may ask the Corps to delineate the special aquatic sites and other waters of the United States, but there may be a delay if the Corps does the delineation, especially if the project site is large or contains many waters of the United States. Furthermore, the 45 day period will not start until the delineation has been submitted to or completed by the Corps, where appropriate;

(5) If the proposed activity will result in the loss of greater than 1/10 acre of wetlands and a PCN is required, the prospective permittee must submit a statement describing how the mitigation requirement will be satisfied. As an alternative, the prospective permittee may submit a conceptual or detailed mitigation plan.

(6) If any listed species or designated critical habitat might be affected or is in the vicinity of the project, or if the project is located in designated critical habitat, for non-Federal applicants the PCN must include the name(s) of those endangered or threatened species that might be affected by the proposed work or utilize the designated critical habitat that may be affected by the proposed work. Federal applicants must provide documentation demonstrating compliance with the Endangered Species Act; and

(7) For an activity that may affect a historic property listed on, determined to be eligible for listing on, or potentially eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places, for non-Federal applicants the PCN must state which historic property may be affected by the proposed work or include a vicinity map indicating the location of the historic property. Federal applicants must provide documentation demonstrating compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

(c) Form of Pre-Construction Notification: The standard individual permit application form (Form ENG 4345) may be used, but the completed application form must clearly indicate that it is a PCN and must include all of the information required in paragraphs (b)(1) through (7) of this general condition. A letter containing the required information may also be used.

(d) Agency Coordination:

(1) The district engineer will consider any comments from Federal and state agencies concerning the proposed activity's compliance with the terms and conditions of the NWPs and the need for mitigation to reduce the project's adverse environmental effects to a minimal level.

(2) For all NWP 48 activities requiring pre-construction notification and for other NWP activities requiring pre-construction notification to the district engineer that result in the loss of greater than 1/2-acre of waters of the United States, the district engineer will immediately provide (e.g., via facsimile transmission, overnight mail, or other expeditious manner) a copy of the PCN to the appropriate Federal or state offices (U.S. FWS, state natural resource or water quality agency, EPA, State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) or Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO), and, if appropriate, the NMFS). With the exception of NWP 37, these agencies will then have 10 calendar days from the date the material is transmitted to telephone or fax the district engineer notice that they intend to provide substantive, site-specific comments. If so contacted by an agency, the district engineer will wait an additional 15 calendar days before making a decision on the pre-construction notification. The district engineer will fully consider agency comments received within the specified time frame, but will provide no response to the resource agency, except as provided below. The district engineer will indicate in the administrative record associated with each pre-construction notification that the resource agencies' concerns were considered. For NWP 37, the emergency watershed protection and rehabilitation activity may proceed immediately in cases where there is an unacceptable hazard to life or a significant loss of property or economic hardship will occur. The district engineer will consider any comments received to decide whether the NWP 37 authorization should be modified, suspended, or revoked in accordance with the procedures at 33 CFR 330.5.

(3) In cases of where the prospective permittee is not a Federal agency, the district engineer will provide a response to NMFS within 30 calendar days of receipt of any Essential Fish Habitat conservation recommendations, as required by Section 305(b)(4)(B) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

(4) Applicants are encouraged to provide the Corps multiple copies of pre-construction notifications to expedite agency coordination.

(5) For NWP 48 activities that require reporting, the district engineer will provide a copy of each report within 10 calendar days of receipt to the appropriate regional office of the NMFS.

(e) District Engineer's Decision: In reviewing the PCN for the proposed activity, the district engineer will determine whether the activity authorized by the NWP will result in more than minimal individual or cumulative adverse environmental effects or may be contrary to the public interest. If the proposed activity requires a PCN and will result in a loss of greater than 1/10 acre of wetlands, the prospective permittee should submit a mitigation proposal with the PCN. Applicants may also propose compensatory mitigation for projects with smaller impacts. The district engineer will consider any proposed compensatory mitigation the applicant has included in the proposal in determining whether the net adverse environmental effects to the aquatic environment of the proposed work are minimal. The compensatory mitigation proposal may be either conceptual or detailed. If the district engineer determines that the activity complies with the terms and conditions of the NWP and that the adverse effects on the aquatic environment are minimal, after considering mitigation, the district engineer will notify the permittee and include any conditions the district engineer deems necessary. The district engineer must approve any compensatory mitigation proposal before the permittee commences work. If the prospective permittee elects to submit a compensatory mitigation plan with the PCN, the district engineer will expeditiously review the proposed compensatory mitigation plan. The district engineer must review the plan within 45 calendar days of receiving a complete PCN and determine whether the proposed mitigation would ensure no more than minimal adverse effects on the aquatic environment. If the net adverse effects of the project on the aquatic environment (after consideration of the compensatory mitigation proposal) are determined by the district engineer to be minimal, the district engineer will provide a timely written response to the applicant. The response will state that the project can proceed under the terms and conditions of the NWP.

If the district engineer determines that the adverse effects of the proposed work are more than minimal, then the district engineer will notify the applicant either: (1) That the project does not qualify for authorization under the NWP and instruct the applicant on the procedures to seek authorization under an individual permit; (2) that the project is authorized under the NWP subject to the applicant's submission of a mitigation plan that would reduce the adverse effects on the aquatic environment to the minimal level; or (3) that the project is authorized under the NWP with specific modifications or conditions. Where the district engineer determines that mitigation is required to ensure no more than minimal adverse effects occur to the aquatic environment, the activity will be authorized within the 45-day PCN period. The authorization will include the necessary conceptual or specific mitigation or a requirement that the applicant submit a mitigation plan that would reduce the adverse effects on the aquatic environment to the minimal level. When mitigation is required, no work in waters of the United States may occur until the district engineer has approved a specific mitigation plan.

28. **Single and Complete Project**. The activity must be a single and complete project. The same NWP cannot be used more than once for the same single and complete project.

### **Further Information**

1. District Engineers have authority to determine if an activity complies with the terms and conditions of an NWP.

2. NWPs do not obviate the need to obtain other federal, state, or local permits, approvals, or authorizations required by law.
3. NWPs do not grant any property rights or exclusive privileges.
4. NWPs do not authorize any injury to the property or rights of others.
5. NWPs do not authorize interference with any existing or proposed Federal project.