

Change to 18-Pile programmatic effective immediately

Any project that proposes to install or proof steel piles with an impact hammer must undergo individual review with both the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Projects proposing to install concrete, plastic or wooden piles are exempt from the review. Similarly, projects proposing vibratory installation are exempt from review provided no proofing of steel piles is required.

The reason for this change in the 18-pile programmatic is due to potential behavioral and physiological impacts to salmonids from underwater sound pressures produced by driving steel piles with an impact hammer. These impacts to salmonids are described in recent [biological opinions](#) by the NMFS and USFWS.

If your proposed project requires individual review by the NMFS and USFWS simply complete the Specific Project Information Form (SPIF) for piling replacement and submit it to the Corps. A Corps project manager will review the SPIF and fax it to the NMFS and USFWS. Please be advised that the 18-pile programmatic covers only salmonids. Hence, in your SPIF or an addendum you must list any non-salmonids that occur in the action area and analyze the potential effects of the proposed project on these species.

To reduce the potential of harmful effects to salmonids from driving or proofing steel piles with an impact hammer, the NMFS and USFWS may require impact reduction measures. For steel piles 10" or less in diameter, the USFWS has proposed the use of a 6" thick piece of wood between the hammer and pile to attenuate underwater sound pressures. For steel piles greater than 10" in diameter, the USFWS has proposed the use of a 6" piece of wood plus a bubble curtain to attenuate sound.

For additional information on this change to the 18-pile programmatic, please contact [Maryann Baird](#), telephone (206) 764-5531, or [Marcy Reed](#), telephone (206) 764-5529.

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