

## Corps of Engineers Revises and Renews Nationwide Permits

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WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has revised and renewed the nationwide permits for regulating work in wetlands and other waters of the United States under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899.

The new nationwide permits are to be published in the Federal Register on March 12 and take effect on March 19, 2007.

"We have simplified the language of the new nationwide permits to provide clarity and certainty," John Paul Woodley Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works), said. "While we will improve regulatory efficiency, we will also sustain essential levels of environmental protection."

The nationwide permits authorize activities that are similar in nature and cause only minimal adverse environmental impacts individually or cumulatively. Activities range from work associated with aids to navigation and utility lines to Coast Guard-approved bridges and cleanup of hazardous and toxic wastes.

"We went through the rulemaking process," Mr. Woodley said, "and we benefited from the comments of the many stakeholders and other agencies during the public review."

The current set of permits expires on March 18, 2007, and these permits are to replace them.

The Corps' division engineers may add, after public review and consultation, regional conditions to protect local aquatic ecosystems such as fens or bottomland hardwoods or minimize adverse effects on fish or shellfish spawning, wildlife nesting or other ecologically critical events.

Here are some highlights:

- The Corps reissued all the existing permits and added six new ones. The Corps also added a new general condition and eliminated one other.
- The Corps retained the acreage limits from the current nationwide permits.
- The Corps added protections for ephemeral streams, including a 300-linear foot limit.
- The new nationwide permits cover activities such as repairs of uplands, time-sensitive pipeline repairs, repairs to ditches and canals to control erosion, commercial aquaculture operations, reclamation of surface coal mining areas and underground coal mining.

Additional information about the Corps' regulatory program can be found at

<http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/cecwo/reg/> Information about the nationwide permits can be found at  
<http://www.usace.army.mil/cw/cecwo/reg/citizen.htm>

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