

CHAPTER 7A

**FRESHWATER WETLANDS PROTECTION
ACT RULES**

Authority

N.J.S.A. 13:1B-3, 58:10A-1 et seq., specifically 58:10A-4, 58:10A-6 and 13:9B-1 et seq., (P.L. 1987 c.156), specifically 13:9B-25 (section 25 of P.L. 1987 c.156).

Source and Effective Date

R.1988 d.267, effective June 6, 1988 (operative July 1, 1988).
See: 19 N.J.R. 2330(a), 20 N.J.R. 1235(a).

Executive Order No. 66(1978) Expiration Date

The expiration date for Chapter 7A, Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules, was extended by gubernatorial directive from March 16, 1999 to March 16, 2000. See: 31 N.J.R. 871(b).

Chapter Historical Note

Chapter 7A, Wetlands Management, was adopted as R.1972 d.68, effective April 13, 1972. See: 3 N.J.R. 255(a), 4 N.J.R. 96(d).

Chapter 7A, Wetlands Management, was repealed by R.1984 d.164, effective May 7, 1984 (operative June 1, 1984). See: 15 N.J.R. 2090(a), 16 N.J.R. 1073(a).

Chapter 7A, Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules, was adopted as R.1988 d.267, effective June 6, 1988 (operative July 1, 1988). See: 19 N.J.R. 2330(a), 20 N.J.R. 1235(a). Subchapters 16 and 17 were adopted as R.1988 d.312, effective July 5, 1988. See: 20 N.J.R. 576(a), 20 N.J.R. 1553(a).

Petitions for Rulemaking. See: 21 N.J.R. 2675(b), 22 N.J.R. 253(a), 22 N.J.R. 1388(a).

The Executive Order No. 66(1978) expiration date for Chapter 7A, Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules, was extended by gubernatorial directive from June 6, 1993 to March 16, 1997. See: 24 N.J.R. 912(a).

The Executive Order No. 66(1978) expiration date for Chapter 7A, Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules, was extended by gubernatorial directive from March 16, 1997 to March 16, 1998. See: 29 N.J.R. 1308(b).

The Executive Order No. 66(1978) expiration date for Chapter 7A, Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act Rules, was extended by gubernatorial directive from March 16, 1998 to March 16, 1999. See: 30 N.J.R. 1319(a).

Law Review and Journal Commentaries

Freshwater Wetlands Protection: An Update. Lewis Goldshore, Marsha Wolf, 133 N.J.L.J. No. 14, S6 (1993).

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SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

7:7A-1.1 Scope and authority

This chapter constitutes the rules governing the implementation of the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act, P.L. 1987, c.156. The provisions of any State law, rule or regulation to the contrary notwithstanding, the alteration or disturbance in and around freshwater wetland areas in the State, and the discharge of dredged or fill material into State open waters are subject to this chapter and the Act.

Case Notes

The Commissioner has no power under CAFRA to make an independent judgment as to the ability of a nuclear facility to protect against radiation hazards, as regulation in this regard is preempted by the federal government. Public Interest Research Group of New Jersey, Inc. v. State, 152 N.J. Super. 191, 377 A.2d 915 (App.Div.1977), certification denied 75 N.J. 538, 384 A.2d 517 (1977).

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Only lots for which preliminary site plan or subdivision applications had received preliminary approvals were exempt from wetland permit requirements. *Seemar v. Department of Environmental Protection*, 95 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 225.

7:7A-1.2 Construction

This chapter shall be liberally construed to allow the Department to implement fully its statutory functions pursuant to the Act and to the Water Pollution Control Act, N.J.S.A. 58:10A-1 et seq.

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.

See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

Added reference to N.J.S.A. 58:10A-1 et seq.

7:7A-1.3 Forms and information

Any forms, fees or other information required to be submitted by this chapter shall be obtained from and returned to the Land Use Regulation Element, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, CN 401, Trenton, New Jersey 08625. Courier and hand deliveries may be delivered to 5 Station Plaza, 501 East State Street, Trenton, New Jersey. Other sources of information referred to in this chapter are available from the Office of Maps and Publications located at 428 State Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08625.

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.

See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

Added address for other sources of information.

7:7A-1.4 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

“Acid producing deposits” means those geologic deposits containing iron sulfide minerals (pyrite or marcasite) which oxidize upon exposure to oxygen from the air or from surface waters to produce sulfuric acid.

“Act” means the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act, P.L. 1987, c.156.

“Administrator” means the Administrator of the Land Use Regulation Element.

“Advanced stages of construction” means having completed the foundations for buildings or structures, the subsurface improvements for roadways, or the necessary excavation and installation of bedding materials for utility lines. To determine whether a project or part of a project is in “advanced stages of construction,” the Department shall evaluate such proofs as may be provided by the applicant, including, but not limited to, possession of a valid building permit (where legally applicable), evidence of a valid ACOE permit for those activities regulated under the 404 program, and evidence documenting completion of construction activities before the date of assumption. This evidence may include, but is not limited to, the following: documentation

that the local construction official has completed the inspection listed at N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.18(b)1i(2) or 2.18(b)1i(3) for foundations of structures; reports from the municipal engineer documenting inspections of road bed construction; or billing receipts documenting the completion of the above construction activities. “Advanced stages of construction” does not include clearing vegetation, bringing construction materials to the site, site grading or other earth work associated with preparing a site for construction.

“Agency of the State” means each of the principal departments in the executive branch of the State Government, and all boards, divisions, commissions, agencies, departments, councils, authorities, offices or officers within any such departments.

“Applicant” means a person who submits an application for a permit, waiver, or any other Department decision pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A.

“Application for development” means the application form and all accompanying documents required by ordinance for approval of a subdivision plat, site plan, planned development, conditional use, zoning variance or direction of the issuance of a permit pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-34 or N.J.S.A. 40:55D-36.

“Aquatic ecosystem” means waters of the United States, including wetlands, that serve as habitat for interrelated and interacting communities and populations of plants and animals.

“Bank” means the Wetlands Mitigation Bank established pursuant to section 14 of the Act.

“Best Management Practices” (BMP’s) means methods, measures, designs, performance standards, maintenance procedures, and other management practices which prevent or reduce adverse impacts upon or pollution of freshwater wetlands, State open waters, and adjacent aquatic habitats, which facilitate compliance with the Federal Section 404(b)(1) guidelines (40 C.F.R. Part 230), New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Flood Hazard Area Regulations (N.J.A.C. 7:13), 1982 Standards for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control in New Jersey, Storm Water Management Regulations (N.J.A.C. 7:8), and effluent limitations or prohibitions under Section 307(a) of the Federal Act and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Surface Water Quality Standards (N.J.A.C. 7:9-4). Examples include practices found at 33 C.F.R. 330.6, 40 C.F.R. 233.35(a)6, the Department’s Technical Manual for Stream Encroachment, and “A Manual of Freshwater Wetland Management Practices for Mosquito Control in New Jersey”. The manuals included in this definition is only a partial listing, interested parties should contact the Department the most up to date list.

“Clean Water Act”, “Federal Act”, or “CWA” means the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 as amended by the Clean Water Act of 1977 (33 U.S.C. §§ 1251 et seq.) and any amendments and supplements thereto, and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto.

“Climax habitat” means a mature, well developed natural ecological community. See N.J.A.C. 7:7A-14.

“Commissioner” means the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection.

“Compelling public need” means that based on specific facts, the proposed regulated activity will serve an essential health or safety need of the municipality in which the proposed regulated activity is located, that the public health and safety benefit from the proposed use and that the proposed use is required to serve existing needs of the residents of the State, and that there is no other means available to meet the established public need. See N.J.A.C. 7:7A-3.4(a)1.

“Contiguous” means adjacent properties, even if they are separated by human-made barriers or structures or legal boundaries.

“Council” means the Wetlands Mitigation Council established pursuant to Section 14 of the Act.

“Critical habitat for fauna or flora” means:

1. For fauna, areas which serve an essential role in maintaining commercially and recreationally important wildlife, particularly for wintering, breeding, spawning and migrating activities;

2. For flora, areas supporting rare or unique plant species or uncommon vegetational communities in New Jersey.

“Cultivating” means physical methods of soil treatment employed within established farming, ranching and silviculture lands upon planted farm, ranch or forest crops to aid and improve their growth, quality or yield.

“Degraded wetland” means a wetland in which there is impaired surface water flow or groundwater hydrology, or excessive drainage; a wetland which has been partially filled or excavated, contaminated with hazardous substances, or which has an ecological value substantially less than that of undisturbed wetlands in the region.

“Delegable waters” means all waters of the United States, as defined at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-1.4, within the legal boundaries of the State that will be regulated by the Department as part of the Federal 404 program with the exception of:

1. Those waters which are presently used, or are susceptible to use in their natural condition or by reasonable improvement, as a means to transport interstate or foreign commerce shoreward to their ordinary high water mark, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide shoreward to their mean high water mark including adjacent wetlands. In those waters over which the Department does not assume jurisdiction under the 404 program, the Department will retain jurisdiction under State law, and both State and Federal requirements will apply.

2. Specific bodies of water over which the Department will not assume 404 program jurisdiction include, but are not limited to:

i. The entire length of the Delaware River within the State of New Jersey;

ii. Waters of the United States under the jurisdiction of the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission; and

iii. Greenwood Lake.

“Department” means the Department of Environmental Protection.

“Destruction of plant life which would alter the character of a freshwater wetland including the cutting of trees” means:

1. The physical removal of existing wetland vegetation; or

2. Causing the loss of life of vegetation by the application of herbicides or by other means which cause mortality to the established vegetative community.

“Detention basin” means an impoundment area made by constructing an embankment, or excavating a pit, or both, for the purpose of temporarily storing stormwater.

“Discharge of dredged material” means any addition of dredged material into State open waters or freshwater wetlands. The term includes the addition of dredged material into State open waters or freshwater wetlands and the runoff or overflow from a contained land or water dredge material disposal area. Discharges of pollutants into State open waters resulting from the subsequent onshore processing of dredged material are not included within this term and are subject to the New Jersey Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, N.J.S.A. 58:10A-1 et seq., program even though the extraction and deposit of such material may also require an open water fill permit or a 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or a Water Quality Certification.

“Discharge of fill material” means the addition of “fill material” into State open waters or freshwater wetlands. The term includes, but is not limited to, the following activities:

1. Placement of fill that is necessary for the construction of any structure;

2. The building of any structure or impoundment requiring rock, sand, dirt, or other materials for its construction;

3. Site-development fill for recreational, industrial, commercial, residential, and other uses;

4. Causeways or road fills;

5. Dams and dikes;

6. Artificial islands;

7. Property protection or reclamation devices, or both, such as riprap, groins, seawalls, breakwaters, and revetments;

8. Beach nourishment;

9. Levees;

10. Fill for structures such as sewage treatment facilities, intake and outfall pipes associated with power plants and subaqueous utility lines; and

11. Artificial reefs.

“Disturbance of the water level or water table” a term used to define regulated activity in N.J.A.C. 7:7A-2.3(a)2, means the alteration of the existing elevation of groundwater or surface water, regardless of duration of such alteration, by:

1. Adding or impounding a sufficient quantity of stormwater or water from other sources to modify the existing vegetation, values or functions of the wetland; and

2. Draining, ditching or otherwise causing the depletion of the existing groundwater or surface water levels such that the activity would modify the existing vegetation, values or functions of the wetland.

“Ditch” means a linear topographic depression with bed and banks of human construction which conveys water to or from a site. This does not include channelized or redirected natural water courses.

“Documented habitat for threatened or endangered species” means areas for which:

1. There is recorded evidence of past use by a threatened or endangered species of flora or fauna for breeding, resting, or feeding. Evidence of past use by a species may include, but is not limited to, sightings of the species, or of its sign (for example, skin, scat, shell, track, nest, herbarium records, etc.), as well as identification of its call; and

2. The Department makes the finding that the area remains suitable for use by the specific documented threatened or endangered species during the normal period(s) the species would use the habitat.

“Drainage” means active or passive methods for changing the hydrologic conditions of wetlands or State open water, such as lowering groundwater or surface water levels through pumping, ditching, or otherwise altering water flow patterns.

“Dredging” means removal of wetlands or State open water soils or sediments through use of mechanical, hydraulic, or pneumatic tools or other means.

“Dredged material” means material that is excavated or dredged from waters of the United States.

“Dumping” means the discharge, placement or abandonment of solid, semi-solid or liquid materials.

“Element” means the Land Use Regulation Element.

“Environmental commission” means a municipal advisory body created pursuant to P.L. 1968, c.245 (N.J.S.A. 40:56A-1 et seq.).

“EPA priority wetlands” means wetlands which are designated as priority wetlands by EPA. The “Priority Wetlands List for the State of New Jersey” is available from the Office of Maps and Publications listed at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-1.3.

“Equal ecological value” means functional equivalency, including similar wildlife habitat, similar vegetative species coverage and density, equivalent flood water storage capacity, and equivalency of any other values or functions specific to a particular wetland.

“Established, ongoing farming, ranching or silviculture operation” means activities on areas subject to a farming, ranching silviculture use as of June 30, 1988. Activities on areas lying fallow as part of a conventional rotational cycle are part of an established operation. Activities which bring an area into farming, silviculture, or ranching use are not part of an establishing operation. An operation ceases to be established when the area on which it was conducted has been converted to another use or has lain idle so long that modifications to the hydrological regime are necessary to resume operations.

“Excavation” means to dig or remove soil, rocks, etc., resulting in a change in site elevation.

“Federal 404 program” means the program regulating the discharge of dredged or fill materials pursuant to Section 404 of the Federal Act.

“Fill” means the deposition of material (for example, soil, sand, earth, rock, concrete, pavement, solid material of any kind, etc.) into an area which changes the resultant elevation in relation to surface water or groundwater level. “Fill” also means the material deposited.

“FW” means the general surface water classification applied to fresh waters in the Department’s Surface Water Quality Standards, N.J.A.C. 7:9-4, and subsequent amendments thereto.

“FW1” means those fresh waters that originate in and are wholly within Federal or State parks, forests, fish and wildlife lands, and other special holdings, that are to be maintained in their natural state of quality (set aside for posterity, and not subjected to any wastewater discharges of human origin), as designated in the Department’s Surface Water Quality Standards, N.J.A.C. 7:9-4, and subsequent amendments thereto.

“FW2” means the general surface water classification applied in the Department’s Surface Water Quality Standards, N.J.A.C. 7:9-4, and subsequent amendments thereto, to those fresh waters that are not designated as FW1 or Pinelands Waters.

“Freshwater wetland” or wetland means an area that is inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, commonly known as hydrophytic vegetation; provided, however, that the Department, in designating a wetland, shall use the three-parameter approach (that is, hydrology, soils and vegetation) enumerated in the “Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands,” and any subsequent amendments thereto, incorporated herein by reference. These include tidally influenced wetlands which have not been included on a promulgated map pursuant to the Wetlands Act of 1970, N.J.S.A. 13:9A-1 et seq.

“Freshwater wetlands permit” means a permit to engage in a regulated activity in a freshwater wetland issued pursuant to the Act and this chapter.

“Harvesting” means physical measures employed directly upon farm, forest, or ranch crops within established agricultural and silvicultural lands to bring about their removal from farm, forest, or ranch land, but does not include the construction of farm, forest, or ranch roads or other engineering practices such as drainage which would alter the existing character of the farm, forest or ranch land.

“Head waters” means the point on a non-tidal stream above which the average annual flow is less than five cubic feet per second. The Department may estimate this point from available data by using area annual precipitation, area drainage basin maps, and the average annual runoff coefficient, or by similar means. For streams that are dry for long periods of the year, the Department may establish headwaters as that point of the stream where flow of five cubic feet per second is exceeded 50 percent of the time.

“Hydric soils” means a soil that in its undrained condition is saturated, flooded, or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions that favor the growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation. These soils may be on New Jersey’s Official List of Hydric Soils developed by the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory, in “The Wetlands of New Jersey” 1985, published by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service or in the Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands and amendments thereto. Alluvial land, as mapped by soil surveys, or other soils exhibiting hydric characteristics identified through field investigation as described in Part III, field indicators and other available information of the “Federal Manual” may also be considered a hydric soil for the purposes of wetland classification. Also, wet phase of somewhat poorly drained soils not on New Jersey’s Official List of Hydric Soils may also, on occasion, be associated with a wetland and therefore for the purposes of this Act shall be considered a hydric soil.

“Hydrophyte” means plant life adapted to growth and reproduction under periodically saturated root zone conditions during at least a portion of the growing season. A listing of these plants can be found in the “National List of Plant Species that Occur in Wetlands: 1988—New Jersey” and amendments thereto, compiled by the USFWS, United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), USEPA and the United States Soil Conservation Service.

“Individual permit” means a permit issued pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-3.

“Intermittent stream” means surface water drainage channels with definite bed and banks in which there is not a permanent flow of water. Most intermittent streams are shown on Soil Conservation Service county soil surveys.

“Isolated wetlands or isolated State open waters” means a freshwater wetland or State open water which is not connected to a surface water tributary system discharging into a lake, pond, river, stream or other surface water feature. The term “connected to” includes all surface water connections whether regulated or not, as well as connections by way of stormwater or drainage pipes. “Connected to” does not include a groundwater connection nor does it include overland flow unless there is evidence of scouring or erosion.

“Lake, pond, or reservoir” means any impoundment, whether naturally occurring or created in whole or in part by the building of structures for the retention of surface water.

“Letters of interpretation” are letters issued by the Department for the purpose of indicating the presence or absence of wetlands, State open waters, or transition areas (see N.J.A.C. 7:7A-8); for the purpose of verifying or delineating the boundaries of freshwater wetlands, State open waters, transition areas; or to obtain a wetland resource value classification.

“Linear development” means land uses such as roads, drives, railroads, sewerage and stormwater management pipes, gas and water pipelines, electric, telephone and other transmission lines and the rights-of-way therefor, the basic function of which is to connect two points. Linear development shall not mean residential, commercial, office, or industrial buildings, improvements within a development such as utility lines or pipes, or internal circulation roads.

“Major discharge” means:

1. Discharges of dredged or fill material into areas identified by the Department, in consultation with USEPA, the Corps and the USFWS, which could have the following impacts:
 - i. Significant adverse effects on freshwater wetlands or State open waters which are unique for a particular geographic region;
 - ii. Significant reductions in the ecological, commercial, or recreational values of more than five acres of a freshwater wetland or State open water; or

iii. Affects to a Federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened species;

2. Wetland fills involving more than 10,000 cubic yards of material.

“Maximum extent practicable” means to the maximum extent after weighing, evaluating and interpreting alternatives to protect the ecological integrity of a wetland or State open water.

“Mitigation” means activities carried out pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-14 in order to compensate for freshwater wetlands or State open waters loss or disturbance caused by regulated activities.

“Offsite” means the area not onsite.

“Onsite” means the area located within the legal boundary of the property or properties on which the regulated activity or activities are proposed, are occurring, or have occurred, as set forth in the deed for that area, plus any contiguous land owned by the same person as set forth in the deed or deeds for that contiguous land, as these boundaries existed on July 1, 1988 or on the date of submission of the application if lots and blocks were merged subsequent to July 1, 1988.

“Open water fill permit” means the type of New Jersey Pollution Discharge Elimination System permit issued pursuant to this chapter and N.J.S.A. 58:10A-1 et seq., which governs the discharge of dredged or fill material into State open waters.

“Ordinary high water mark” means that line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas.

“Permit” means an approval to engage in a regulated activity in a freshwater wetland, State open water, or transition area issued pursuant to the Act and this chapter.

“Person” means an individual, corporation, partnership, association, the Federal government, the State, municipality, commission or political subdivision of the State or any interstate body.

“Pilings” means timber, metal, concrete or other similar structures driven, dropped, poured, or placed to support a vertical load.

“Placing of obstructions” means to deposit, construct, install or otherwise situate any obstacle which will affect the values or functions of a freshwater wetland.

“Plowing” means all forms of primary tillage, including moldboard, chisel, or wide-blade, plowing, discing, harrow-

ing, and similar physical means utilized on farm, forest or ranch land for the breaking up, cutting, turning over, or stirring of soil to prepare it for the planting of crops. The term does not include the redistribution of spoil, rock, sand, or other surficial materials in a manner which changes any area of wetlands to dry land. For example, the redistribution of surface materials by blading, grading, or other means to fill in wetland areas is not plowing. Rock crushing activities which result in the loss of natural drainage characteristics, the reduction of water storage and recharge capabilities, or the overburden of natural water filtration capacities do not constitute plowing. Plowing will never involve a discharge of material.

“Practicable alternative” means other choices available and capable of being carried out after taking into consideration cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of overall project purposes, and may require an area not owned by the applicant which could reasonably have been or be obtained, utilized, expanded, or managed in order to fulfill the basic purpose of the proposed activity.

“Preliminary approval” means the conferral of certain rights pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-46, 48 and 49 prior to final approval after specific elements of a development plan have been agreed upon by the planning board and the applicant.

“Project” means the following:

1. For an exemption under N.J.A.C. 7:7A-2.7(d) based on the application for or the grant of preliminary site plan approval, “project” means all buildings, structures, pavements, and other improvements specifically depicted on the site plans referenced in the resolution approving the site plan.

2. For an exemption under N.J.A.C. 7:7A-2.7(d) based on the application for or the grant of preliminary subdivision approval, “project” means:

i. Where subdivision approval is the last stage of municipal review before the owner/applicant may apply for a building permit to begin construction, the “project” is the development of the subdivision consistent with the lot coverage, use, and density restrictions of the zoning ordinance in effect at the subdivision approval; or

ii. Where site plan approval is required prior to construction, “project” means the proposed economic development, whether commercial, industrial or residential, intended to be constructed on that portion of a tract of land that is the focus of the qualifying approval. Although “project” is not limited to specific structures shown on the subdivision plans, it is limited to development on those portions of a tract of land that were the focus of the qualifying subdivision application or approval. Development on other lands, such as development on the remainder of a larger tract or on a contiguous property in common ownership, are not included within a “project.”

In order to determine if an applicant qualifies for an exemption under this definition, the Department will determine the existence of a proposed economic development at the time of the subdivision application. Because the purpose of the exemption is to protect that degree of investment in planning and development that the preliminary site plan or subdivision application normally represents, where the subdivision is merely a division of land and no substantial investment was made in planning or development, there can be no exempted project. Therefore, an application for the subdivision of lands simply for future development, yet to be planned, or simply for resale shall not qualify for an exemption. To determine the existence of a proposed economic development and to determine which portion of a tract was the focus of subdivision approval or application, the Department will examine the resolution granting approval and any documentation submitted with the application, including, but not limited to, drainage, engineering, traffic, utility, landscaping, soil and environmental plans and reports as well as the subdivision plan. In cases where the above information is unclear, the Department may consider money spent or obligated on engineering and design in the preparation of the subdivision application to determine if a substantial investment has been made in an economic development. Money spent or obligated for the initial purchase, carrying costs, or legal services will not be considered in determining the existence of a proposed economic development.

iii. The following are examples of how the Department will determine the "project" exempted on the basis of the application for or grant of preliminary subdivision approval:

(1) Where a project was to be developed in three sections but a complete application for preliminary approval was submitted, accepted and subsequently approved for only one section, only the development planned for that section is exempt and the development envisioned for sections two and three is not exempt. This is not altered by the fact that some depiction of that future development on the remainder of the parcel might be required by a local planning board in concept or sketch form.

(2) Where an entire parcel is subdivided into five conforming residential lots, the residential development planned on all five lots is exempt. However, where the focus of the subdivision application and approval is on less than the entire tract of land, which lesser portion is divided into five single family house lots, and the remainder of the tract is left as a bulk parcel for further subdivision or other planning board approval, only development on the five lots is exempt. It is irrelevant that the configuration of the remainder lot has been changed by the subdivision or that the remainder lot has been renumbered.

(3) Where the land to be divided for a commercial industrial park straddles two townships and the developer received approval to subdivide the land in township A and sold the unsubdivided portion in township B to another developer, only the development on the land in township A could be considered the subject of township A's subdivision approval. Therefore, only the development on the land in township A is exempt. It is irrelevant that the original developer had, from the start, contemplated a commercial industrial park for the property in both townships or that the office building contemplated on the land in township B did not require further subdivision.

(4) Where land is divided for the sole purpose of bequeathing it sometime in the future to one's children to be developed as they wish, no economic development was contemplated when the application was made or approval granted. After the land passes to the children and one of them decides to build, that development is not exempt. The purpose of the exemption is to protect that degree of investment in planning and development that the preliminary site plan or subdivision application normally represents. Where the subdivision is merely a division of land and no investment was made in the planning or development, there can be no exempted project.

(5) Where land is subdivided but requires further subdivision, other than de minimis changes for road right of ways or other infrastructure, before the applicant can proceed to the next step of municipal approval (either building permits or site plan approvals), there is no evidence of intended economic development at the time of initial subdivision application or approval, because the proposed economic development only comes into being with the subsequent, untimely subdivision. Therefore, there is no basis for exemption.

3. For all development determined to be exempt by the Department, it should be noted that once the development is constructed, the exempted "project" has been built. If, for example, the owner of a commercial building decides afterward that it is necessary to construct an addition, and goes back to the municipal authority for a new or amended site plan or subdivision approval, the exemption has been "used up" and the addition is subject to the permitting requirements of the Act. Similarly, for residential approvals, once the houses and any accessory structures planned along with the house (for example, detached garages, barns, storage sheds, pools) are constructed, the exemption has been exhausted and any later additions or structural improvements are subject to the permitting requirements of the Act. Note that if there is an interruption of more than one year before construction of an accessory structure claimed to have been planned along with the house, there is a rebuttable presumption that the structure constitutes a later addition and will require a permit. See also N.J.A.C. 7:7A-2.7(e)1 and 2 for changes that void exemptions for projects still in the local approval process.

“Property” means the area contained within the legal boundary as defined by municipal block and lot, or right-of-way description as set forth in the deed for that area.

“Public hearing” means an administrative non-adversarial type hearing before a representative or representatives of the Department providing the opportunity for public comment, but does not include cross-examination.

“Redevelopment” means the construction of structures or improvements on or below impervious surfaces such as buildings, asphalt, concrete, and other materials which will not allow infiltration of liquids, legally existing in the transition area prior to July 1, 1989.

“Regulated activity” means any of the activities defined at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-2.3.

“Seeding” means the sowing of seed and placement of seedlings to produce farm, ranch, or forest crops and includes the placement of soil beds for seeds or seedlings on established farm and forest lands.

“Significant adverse impact” shall be deemed to exist where it is determined that a modification of a wetland will negatively affect the ecological integrity of the wetland and its biotic components. Such modifications may include, but are not limited to:

1. An alteration of the water table or hydrologic patterns in the wetland or its subwatershed;
2. An increase in erosion resulting in increased sedimentation in the wetland or State open water;
3. A change in the natural chemistry of the ground or surface water in the wetland;
4. A loss of wetland habitat;
5. A reduction in wetland habitat diversity;
6. A change in wetlands species composition; or
7. A significant disturbance of areas used by indigenous and migratory wildlife for breeding, nesting, or feeding.

“Silviculture” means the planting, cultivating and harvesting by cutting or digging, of Christmas trees or nursery stock. After harvesting, new seedlings are replanted for a future crop. For the purposes of this chapter, “silviculture” does not include forestry activities such as the production of lumber products or firewood.

“Special aquatic site” means any site described in subpart E of the 404(b)1 guidelines (40 C.F.R. 230 et seq., or any amendments thereto), with the exception of freshwater wetlands which, for the purposes of this chapter shall not be considered special aquatic sites.

“State Forester” means the chief forester employed by the Department.

“State open waters” means those waters of the United States within the boundary of the State or subject to its jurisdiction that are not wetlands as defined in this section.

“Swale” means a linear topographic depression, either naturally occurring or of human construction, which drains less than 50 acres. Swales are wetland features meeting the three parameter approach, do not have distinguishable bed and banks and are not intermittent streams. A swale can not be within a larger wetland complex, nor is it an undulation in the boundary of a wetland complex. A swale is a natural or human-made feature, which has formed or was constructed in uplands to convey surface water runoff from the surrounding upland areas. The definition of swales generally does not include wetland features over 50 feet in width at the widest point which are considered by the Department to be independent wetland features.

“Threatened or endangered species” shall be those species identified pursuant to the Endangered and Nongame Species Conservation Act, N.J.S.A. 23:2A-1 et seq., or those identified pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, 16 U.S.C. 1531 et al. and subsequent amendments thereto.

“Tidal waters” means fresh or saline waters under tidal influence, up to the head of the tide.

“Transition area” means an area of land adjacent to a freshwater wetland which minimizes adverse impacts on the wetland or serves as an integral component of the wetlands ecosystem.

“Transition area waiver” means a waiver issued by the Department to engage in any of the prohibited activities enumerated at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-6.2(a) in a transition area issued by the Department pursuant to the Act and this chapter. A transition area waiver may be issued by the Department in the transition area adjacent to either a freshwater wetlands of exceptional or intermediate resource value and may take one of the following forms:

1. Transition area waiver, Reduction. This waiver may be approved on the basis of a finding of no substantial impact or if the waiver is necessary to avoid an extraordinary or substantial hardship as defined at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-7.2(g) or 7.3(f), respectively. The waiver would result in a reduction in the standard width of a transition area without requiring an expansion of the remaining transition area for compensation;
2. Transition area waiver, Special Activities. This waiver may be issued to approve the partial elimination of the standard transition area, without requiring an expansion of the remaining transition area for compensation for the special activities set forth below:
 - i. Stormwater management facilities as defined at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-7.4(b)1;
 - ii. Linear development as defined at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-1.4;

iii. Activities permitted under the specific Statewide general permits listed at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-7.4(e). The Statewide general permits themselves are set forth at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.2(a); or

iv. Activities defined as redevelopment pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-7.4(f); or

3. Transition area waiver, Averaging Plan. This waiver may be issued to approve a plan to modify the overall shape of the standard transition area without reducing the total square footage of the standard transition area.

“Trout production waters” (TP) means water designated in the Department’s Surface Water Quality Standards, N.J.A.C. 7:9-4, for use by trout for spawning or nursery purposes during their first summer.

“USEPA” (EPA) means the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

“USFWS” means the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service.

“USGS” means the United States Geologic Survey.

“Water-dependent uses” means development that cannot physically function without direct access to the body of water along which it is proposed. Uses, or portions of uses, that can function on sites not adjacent to the water are not considered water dependent regardless of the economic advantages that may be gained from a waterfront location.

“Watershed” means the smallest drainage area of a specific creek, stream, river, pond, lake or other surface water body within which a particular site is located.

“Waters of the United States” means:

1. All waters which are currently used, were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;

2. All interstate waters including interstate wetlands;

3. All other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), wetlands, mudflats, sandflats, sloughs, wet meadows, or natural ponds the use, degradation, or destruction of which would affect or could affect interstate or foreign commerce including any such waters:

i. Which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes;

ii. From which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce;

iii. Which are used or could be used for industrial purposes by industries in interstate commerce;

iv. Which are or would be used as habitat by birds protected by Migratory Bird Treaties;

v. Which are or would be used as habitat by other migratory birds which cross state lines;

vi. Which are or would be used as habitat for endangered and threatened species; or

vii. Which are used to irrigate crops sold in interstate commerce;

4. All impoundments of waters otherwise defined as waters of the United States under the definition;

5. Tributaries of waters identified in paragraphs 1 through 4 of this definition;

6. The territorial seas; and

7. Wetlands adjacent to waters identified in paragraphs 1 through 6 of this definition other than those that are themselves wetlands.

The following waters are generally not considered “waters of the United States”. However, the right is reserved to determine on a case by case basis, if particular watercourses or waterbodies are “waters of the United States”:

1. Non-tidal drainage and irrigation ditches excavated on dry land;

2. Artificially irrigated areas which would revert to upland if the irrigation ceased;

3. Artificial lakes or ponds created by excavating and/or diking dry land to collect and retain water and which are used exclusively for such purposes as stock watering, irrigation, settling basins, or rice growing;

4. Artificial reflecting or swimming pools or other small ornamental bodies of water created by excavating and/or diking dry land to retain water for primarily aesthetic reasons;

5. Waterfilled depressions created in dry land incidental to construction activity and pits excavated in dry land for the purpose of obtaining fill, sand, or gravel unless and until the construction or excavation operation is abandoned and the resulting body of water meets the above definition of “waters of the United States”;

6. Waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons designed to meet the requirements of the CWA (other than cooling ponds); and

7. Erosional channels less than two feet wide and six inches deep in upland areas resulting from poor soil management practices.

“Water Quality Certification (WQC)” is the determination that the Department shall make pursuant to Section 401 of the Federal Act and N.J.S.A. 58:10A-1 et seq. in the evaluation of a proposed activity which requires a Federal license or permit.

(e) A person who requests a letter of interpretation and does not receive a response within the above deadlines may directly apply for a freshwater wetlands permit. In the event that a letter of interpretation is not issued within the deadlines imposed in this subchapter, the letter of interpretation fee will be applied to a permit application fee at the applicant's request.

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

Recodified from 8.7; new (a)-(c) added; existing (a) and (b) recodified as (d) and (e).

7:7A-8.9 Cancellation and resubmission of applications

If an application is not complete for final review within 60 days of a request for additional information, the Department shall send a letter cancelling the application and requiring the application for a freshwater wetlands permit or transition area waiver. A new application will be required to reactivate the Department's review. If the applicant sends the Department a letter documenting good cause for not supplying the requested information within the 60 day period the Department will grant an automatic extension of thirty days. The Department will grant additional 30-day extensions upon receiving a written request for such extension from the applicant.

New Rule: R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

7:7A-8.10 Hearings and appeal

(a) An applicant or other affected party may request an adjudicatory hearing to contest a decision on a letter of interpretation pursuant to this subchapter, by complying with the procedures set forth in (b), (c) and (d) below.

(b) Before requesting an adjudicatory hearing, the applicant or other affected party shall make a good faith effort to resolve any dispute arising during the letter of interpretation process with the project review officer.

(c) If the good faith efforts provided in (b) above do not resolve the dispute, the applicant or other affected party may submit a request for an adjudicatory hearing to the Department in writing at the following address:

Office of Legal Affairs
Attention: Adjudicatory Hearing Request
Department of Environmental Protection
PO Box 402
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0402

(d) The applicant or other affected party shall submit the written request under (c) above within 30 days of the Department's decision or the date on which the decision is published in the DEPE Bulletin, whichever is later. Failure to submit the written request within the allotted time shall operate as a waiver of any right to an adjudicatory hearing.

1. Upon receipt of such a request, the Commissioner may refer the matter to the Office of Administrative Law, which shall assign an administrative law judge to conduct a hearing on the matter in the form of a contested case hearing pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act, N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq., and the Uniform Administrative Procedure Rules, N.J.A.C. 1:1.

2. Within 45 days of receipt of the administrative law judge's decision, the Commissioner shall affirm, reject, or modify the decision.

3. The Commissioner's action shall be considered final agency action for the purposes of the Administrative Procedure Act, and shall be subject only to judicial review as provided in the Rules of Court.

New Rule, R.1993 d.159, effective April 19, 1993.
See: 24 N.J.R. 912(b), 25 N.J.R. 1755(b).

SUBCHAPTER 9. GENERAL PERMITS

7:7A-9.1 General standards for issuing Statewide general permits

(a) This section details the process for the issuance of new Statewide General permits and the readoption of previously issued Statewide General permits (except for Statewide general permits numbers 6 and 7). The remaining sections in this subchapter detail the process for authorizing various activities under the issued Statewide general permits. Before issuing or reissuing a Statewide general permit, the Department will propose a draft Statewide general permit in the form of a rule proposal pursuant to the New Jersey Administrative Procedure Act. N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq. In addition to these public notice and comment procedures, the Department will send a copy of the draft general permit to USEPA, and will issue a public notice meeting the requirements of N.J.A.C. 7:7A-11.1(a).

(b) The Department may issue Statewide general permits only if all of the following conditions are met:

1. The activities meet the limitations specified in (c)1 below;

2. After conducting an environmental analysis, the Department determines that the regulated activities will cause only minimal adverse environmental impacts when performed separately, will have only minimal cumulative adverse impacts on the environment, and will cause only minor impacts on freshwater wetlands and State open waters;

3. After determining that the activity will be in conformance with the purposes of the Act, and will not violate the Federal Act; and

4. After providing public notice and opportunity for a public hearing.

(c) In addition to the conditions in N.J.A.C. 7:7A-13.1, N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.3, and the applicable requirements of N.J.A.C. 7:7A-13.2, each general permit shall contain limitations as follows:

1. A specific description of the type(s) of activities which are authorized, including limitations for any single operation, to ensure that the requirements of (a) above are satisfied. At a minimum, these limitations shall include:

- i. The maximum quantity of material that may be discharged;
- ii. The type(s) of material that may be discharged;
- iii. The depth of fill permitted;
- iv. The maximum extent to which an area may be modified; and
- v. The size and type of structure that may be constructed.

2. A precise description of the geographic area to which the general permit applies, including, when appropriate, limitations on the type(s) of water(s) or wetlands where operations may be conducted, to ensure that the requirements of (a) above are satisfied.

(d) The Department may modify a general permit issued pursuant to this subchapter by adding special conditions applicable to a particular project or activity which must be met in order to qualify for authorization under the general permit.

(e) The Department may rescind a general permit and thereafter require individual permits for activities previously covered by the general permit, if it finds that the general permit no longer meets the standards of the Act and this chapter.

(f) The Department shall review each general permit a minimum of every five years. This review shall include public notice and opportunity for public hearing. Upon this review the Department shall either modify, reissue or revoke all general permits.

(g) If a general permit is not modified or reissued within five years of publication in the New Jersey Register, it shall automatically expire.

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.

See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

Repealed and replaced (a) and (b), deleted (e) and recodified (f)-(h) as (e)-(g).

Case Notes

Freshwater wetlands permit denied; not an isolated site. Middletown Board of Education v. Department of Environmental Protection, 94 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 147.

Wetlands natural drainage flow was associated with a surface water tributary system; freshwater wetlands permit denied. Stavros v. DEPE, 94 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 23.

7:7A-9.2 Statewide General Permit Authorization

(a) The following activities in freshwater wetlands and State open waters may be authorized under the following Statewide General Permits provided the activity is in compliance with specific conditions contained in the Statewide General Permit and with the provisions in (b) below and the standards and conditions for all Statewide General Permits in N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.3 and provided the activities are in compliance with the Act, this chapter, and the Federal Act:

1. The repair, rehabilitation, replacement, maintenance or reconstruction of any previously authorized, currently serviceable structure, fill, roadway, public utility, active irrigation or drainage ditch, or stormwater management facility lawfully existing prior to July 1, 1988 or permitted under the Act, provided such activities do not deviate from plans of the original activity and further provided that the previously authorized structure, fill, roadway, utility, ditch or facility has not been and will not be put to uses differing from those specified in any permit authorizing its original construction. Minor deviations due to changes in materials or construction techniques and which are necessary to make repairs, rehabilitation or replacements are allowed provided such changes do not result in disturbance of additional freshwater wetlands or State open waters upon completion of the activity;

2. Discharge of material for backfill or bedding for utility lines, provided there is no change in preconstruction elevation and bottom contours. Excess material must be removed to an upland disposal area. A "utility line" is defined as any pipe or pipeline for the transportation of any gaseous, liquid, liquefiable, or slurry substance, for any purpose, and any cable, line, or wire for the transmission for any purpose of electrical energy, telephone and telegraph messages, and radio and television communication. The activities allowed by this Statewide General Permit shall comply with the following conditions:

- i. The activity encompasses no more than one acre of wetlands;
- ii. The width of the area of disturbance within the right-of-way for the project is no more than 20 feet;
- iii. The project is not located in a wetland of exceptional resource value;
- iv. The upper-most 18 inches of any excavation is backfilled with the original soil material if feasible and otherwise with suitable material. The excavation must be backfilled to the preexisting elevation;

v. The area above the excavation is replanted in accordance with applicable BMPs with native, indigenous wetland species; and

vi. The activity is designed so as not to interfere with the natural hydraulic characteristics of the wetland and watershed;

3. Discharge of return water from an upland, contained, dredged material disposal area provided the State has issued a site specific or generic certification (Water Quality Certificate) under section 401 of the Federal Act. The dredging itself may also require State and Federal permits;

4. All regulated activities, including work, discharges, and the construction or placement of structures, which are undertaken, authorized or otherwise expressly approved in writing by the Department for the investigation, cleanup or removal of hazardous substances as defined by or pursuant to the Spill Compensation and Control Act, N.J.S.A. 58:10-23.11 et seq., or pollutants, as defined by the New Jersey Water Pollution Control Act, N.J.S.A. 58:10A-1 et seq., provided the following conditions are met.

i. If the proposed cleanup activity is to take place in an exceptional resource value wetland, the Statewide General Permit authorization shall be issued only if the Department finds that there are no practicable alternatives to the investigation, cleanup and removal of the hazardous substances or pollutants that would involve less or no disturbance or destruction of wetlands or State open waters.

ii. Mitigation shall be performed according to the procedures for mitigation at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-14 for all disturbance or destruction of freshwater wetlands or State open waters caused by a cleanup authorized under this general permit. The mitigation plan may be incorporated as part of the document by which the Department approves the cleanup or it may be submitted as part of the Statewide General Permit authorization application. The Statewide General Permit authorization will not be issued until the mitigation plan is submitted and approved by the Element according to the standards at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-14.

5. Minor work or temporary structures required for the removal for non-historic wrecked, abandoned, or disabled vessels, or the removal of man-made obstructions to navigation. This Statewide General Permit does not authorize maintenance dredging, stream cleaning, shoal removal, or river bank snagging.

6. Regulated activities in freshwater wetlands (applicants should be advised that these wetlands may not qualify for filling under Nationwide permit number 26 in areas below NGVD elevation 10) or State open waters which are not part of a surface water tributary system discharging into an inland lake or pond, or a river or stream, provided:

i. The activity would not result in the loss or substantial modification of more than one acre of freshwater wetland or State open waters;

ii. The activity will not take place in a wetland of exceptional resource value as defined in N.J.A.C. 7:7A-2.5(a)1 nor in State open waters defined as a special aquatic site; and

iii. The activity will not take place in wetlands designated as priority wetlands by the USEPA.

7. Regulated activities in ditches of human construction or swales provided:

i. They are located in headwater areas;

ii. They are not exceptional resource value wetlands;

iii. They are not designated a priority wetlands by the USEPA;

iv. The activity would not result in the loss or substantial modification of more than one acre of wetlands or State open waters; and

v. The proposed activity will not result in a disruption of a surface water connection and the isolation of adjacent wetlands or State open waters.

8. The construction of additions or appurtenant improvements to be constructed within 100 feet of residential dwellings lawfully existing prior to July 1, 1988, provided that the improvements or additions require less than a cumulative surface area of 750 square feet of fill and disturbance.

9. The construction of State or Federally funded roads which:

i. Were planned and developed in accordance with the "National Environmental Policy Act of 1969", the Federal Act, and Executive Order Number 53 (approved November 21, 1983); and

ii. Were the subject of an application made prior to July 1, 1988 to and were subsequently approved by the United States Army Corps of Engineers for an individual or general permit under the Federal Act, provided that:

(1) Upon expiration of a permit, any application for a renewal or modification thereof shall be made to the Department; and

(2) The Department shall not require transition areas as a condition of the renewal or modification of the permit.

10. Minor road crossing fills and expansion of existing road crossing fills including attendant features, both temporary and permanent, that are part of a single and complete project for crossing a freshwater wetland or State open water, provided that:

- i. The crossing is bridged, culverted or otherwise designed to prevent the restriction of, and to withstand, expected high flows;
 - ii. The disturbance of any freshwater wetlands does not extend more than 50 feet on either side of the ordinary high water mark of State open waters. Where no State open waters are present, the total length of the disturbance or modification of freshwater wetlands caused by the crossing shall be no greater than 100 feet. The 50 or 100 foot crossing length limit does not apply to widening of existing roadways;
 - iii. The total area of freshwater wetlands and/or State open waters disturbed or modified does not exceed 0.25 acres;
 - iv. The total fill (gross) to be placed, per crossing, in State open waters does not exceed 200 cubic yards of fill below the top of bank or high water mark;
 - v. The crossing is designed to minimize disturbance and other detrimental effects upon freshwater wetland or State open waters through the use of best management practices including, but not limited to:
 - (1) Minimizing cartway, shoulder widths and side slopes of the roadway;
 - (2) Stabilizing all disturbed areas in accordance with the Standards for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control;
 - (3) Using suitable, clean, non-toxic fill material; and
 - (4) Designing the crossing so as not to impede fish passage, when a watercourse is present, by maintaining the existing gradient and bottom contours of the watercourse; using open arch or box culverts; and using single large open arches or culverts to span the watercourse.
11. Construction of stormwater outfall structures and associated stormwater conveyance structures such as pipes, headwalls, rip-rap and other energy dissipation structures, provided the following conditions are met:
- i. The structures are designed to minimize the area of freshwater wetlands or State open waters disturbance;
 - ii. The limit of disturbance or modification of freshwater wetlands or State open waters for any conveyance structures does not exceed 20 feet in width;
 - iii. The total area of freshwater wetlands or State open waters disturbed or modified does not exceed 0.25 acres;
 - iv. The facility is designed in accordance with the Standards for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control in New Jersey, promulgated by the New Jersey State Soil Conservation Committee, Division of Rural Resources, New Jersey Department of Agriculture. If applicable, the facility shall be designed in accordance with a soil erosion and sediment control plan approved by the appropriate Soil Conservation District. If no plan is required the applicant shall certify to the Department that the proposed facility is in accordance with the standards for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control;
 - v. All stormwater which is discharged into a freshwater wetland or State open water from an outfall constructed under this Statewide general permit is first filtered or otherwise treated outside of the freshwater wetland or State open water, to minimize sediment, pollutants, and any other detrimental effects upon the freshwater wetland or State open water. Detention basins, contour terraces and grassed swales are examples of pre-discharge treatment techniques which may be required by the Department. This Statewide General Permit does not authorize placement of detention facilities in freshwater wetlands or State open waters. The Department will take into consideration whether the outfall is part of a Regional Stormwater Management Plan already approved by the Department;
 - vi. The total amount of rip-rap or any other material used for energy dissipation at the end of the headwall placed in the freshwater wetland or State open water does not exceed 10 cubic yards per outfall structure;
 - vii. Excavated areas for the placement of conveyance pipes shall be returned to the pre-existing elevation using the original topsoil to backfill from a depth of 18 inches to the original grade and revegetated with indigenous wetland species (indigenous includes species found on a particular site as well as those found in a particular physiographic region of the State);
 - viii. Pipes used for stormwater conveyance through the wetlands shall be properly sealed with anti-seep collars at a spacing sufficient to prevent drainage of the surrounding wetlands and designed not to exceed the pre-existing elevation;
 - ix. If a detention basin is being proposed as the method of pre-treatment for water quality, routing calculations shall show that the basin has been designed for the one-year storm event according to the Stormwater Management Regulations (N.J.A.C. 7:8) and all subsequent amendments thereto; and
 - x. If a swale is being proposed to convey stormwater through the wetlands, profiles from the outlet to the receiving water body, cross-sections, and design support information shall show that the proposed swale will not result in drainage of the wetlands. Swales in wetlands will only be permitted where onsite conditions prohibit the construction of a buried pipe to convey stormwater to the outfall.

12. Surveying activities such as soil borings and the cutting of vegetation for narrow (three to five feet in width) survey lines. Survey lines of less than three feet in width shall not require Department authorization. Soil borings dug by hand, using non-mechanized means, no greater than three feet in diameter or in depth, shall not require Department authorization pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-2.3(c).

13. Dredging activities in wetland for lake maintenance or restoration provided:

i. The lake is lowered in accordance with a lake lowering permit approval by the Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife;

ii. The lake remains lowered for the minimal amount of time necessary to accomplish the desired maintenance activities;

iii. Documentation (documentation may include aerial photography, original construction plans, core borings, etc.) shows that the area to be dredged will be confined to the original configuration and bottom contours of the lake;

iv. The total wetlands area to be disturbed for access is no more than 0.25 acre. Temporary effects on adjacent wetlands due to the draw down of the lake to perform maintenance activities are not included in the acreage calculation;

v. The Department may require sediment sampling and laboratory analysis if the project site is known or suspected to be contaminated with toxic substances. The results of representative samples shall indicate that the soil materials to be removed are non-contaminated;

vi. There is no detrimental effect to spawning of resident or downstream fish populations;

vii. If located in exceptional resource value wetlands, the activity will not negatively impact the documented threatened or endangered species or its habitat;

viii. No spoil material will be deposited and no dewatering will occur in freshwater wetlands, open waters or other environmentally sensitive areas; and

ix. Dredging for a specific lake will not be authorized more than once every five years.

14. Placement of water level recording devices, water quality monitoring and testing devices, and similar scientific devices, and the drilling of monitoring wells.

15. Mosquito control water management activities conducted by a county mosquito control agency, or Federal agency on Federal land, provided:

i. Best management practices are employed including, but not limited to, shallow swales no more than three feet wide, and low sills no more than three feet wide;

ii. Disturbance of vegetation is minimized;

iii. Only light equipment is used;

iv. Excavated spoils are removed or spread evenly in a shallow layer no more than three inches deep on-site;

v. The existing hydrologic condition of the hydric soils is maintained (that is, excessive drainage is not permitted);

vi. The activities do not take place in exceptional resource value freshwater wetlands; and

vii. The county mosquito control agency or Federal agency submits individual, site-specific project proposals to the Administrator of the State Office of Mosquito Control Coordination, and the Administrator determines that the project is necessary to control a documented mosquito problem to existing residents. After approval by the Administrator, the project shall then be submitted to the Department for Statewide General Permit review in accordance with the requirements of this chapter.

16. Fish and wildlife management activities which do not involve the discharge of more than 10 cubic yards of clean fill, carried out in publicly owned or controlled wildlife management areas, parks or reserves. These activities include, but are not limited to:

i. The placement of artificial nesting structures, nesting islands, observation blinds, sign posts, or fencing;

ii. The clearing, burning or removal of vegetation to increase habitat diversity or to control nuisance flora (when carried out in accordance with an approved wildlife management plan); and

iii. The blocking or filling of human-made drainage ditches for the purpose of restoring previously existing wetland conditions.

17. Trail and/or boardwalk construction on publicly owned or controlled park land, wildlife management areas or reserves, in freshwater wetlands or State open waters, provided:

i. The width of the trail or boardwalk does not exceed six feet, except for barrier free trails or boardwalks designed in accordance with the Barrier Free Subcode of the Standard Uniform Construction Code, N.J.A.C. 5:23-7. This general permit does not authorize construction of restrooms, gazebos, rain shelters, or any covered or enclosed structure;

ii. Natural materials such as wood chips or wooden planks are used to the maximum extent practicable;

iii. The project does not interfere with the natural hydrology of the area; and

iv. The project does not encroach upon or adversely affect the habitat of any threatened or endangered species.

18. The repair, rehabilitation, replacement, maintenance or reconstruction as required by the Dam Safety Standards (N.J.A.C. 7:20-1), of any previously authorized, currently serviceable dam structure, as defined at N.J.A.C. 7:20-1.2, including appurtenant structures, lawfully existing prior to July 1, 1988 or permitted under the Act, provided that the previously authorized structure has not been put to uses differing from those specified in any permit authorizing its original construction. Minor deviations due to changes in materials or construction techniques and which are necessary to make repairs, rehabilitation, replacement, maintenance or reconstruction are allowed provided that:

i. The activity is conducted in accordance with a Dam Permit issued pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:20-1;

ii. The activity results in the filling of no more than one acre of wetlands or State open waters;

iii. If located in exceptional resource value wetlands, the activity will not negatively impact the documented threatened or endangered species or its habitat;

iv. The activity is designed to minimize disturbance and other detrimental effects upon freshwater wetlands or State open waters through the use of best management practices including, but not limited to:

(1) Stabilizing all disturbed areas; and

(2) Using suitable, clean, non-toxic fill material; and

v. The activity will not increase the normal water surface elevation. The normal water surface elevation is the historic level as of the date of completed dam construction and inundation.

19. The construction of public or private recreational and fishing docks, or piers on pilings, cantilevered or floating, and public boat ramps that meet the following criteria:

i. The following criteria shall be met for the construction of docks and piers:

(1) There shall be a maximum of one dock per lot;

(2) If located in exceptional resource value wetlands, the activity will not have a negative impact on a documented threatened or endangered species or its habitat;

(3) The proposed activity does not fill or disturb more than 0.10 acres of wetlands or State open waters. This limitation includes the area shaded directly under the dock;

(4) The width of the dock or pier does not exceed six feet, will be constructed perpendicular to the shoreline, where feasible, and the maximum allowable length will be the minimum length necessary to reach deep water from the shoreline for launching. However, structures shall be constructed a minimum of 50-feet outside of any authorized navigation channel and shall not hinder navigation. The 50 foot limitation does not apply to construction of docks or piers in human-made lagoons;

(5) Space between horizontal planking is no less than 0.25 inches and the width of horizontal planking is no more than four inches; and

(6) The height of the dock or pier above the ground surface shall be no less than four feet.

ii. The following criteria shall be met for the construction of a boat ramp:

(1) It shall be demonstrated that there is no feasible onsite alternative location that will involve less or no disturbance of wetlands;

(2) The boat ramp shall be constructed of concrete or natural materials such as crushed stone or shells and placed at a location requiring the minimum feasible cut or fill;

(3) The proposed activity does not fill or disturb more than 0.10 acres of wetlands or State open waters; and

(4) If located in exceptional resource value wetlands, the activity will not impact a documented threatened or endangered species or its habitat.

20. The placement of gabions, rip-rap, geo-textiles, or other binding mat material for the purpose of bank stabilization activities in State open waters provided:

i. The bank stabilization activity is less than 150 feet in length;

ii. The activity is required by and designed in accordance with the Standards for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control in New Jersey, N.J.S.A. 4:24-42;

iii. The activity is limited to an average of less than one cubic yard of rip-rap per running foot placed along the bank within State open waters;

iv. The material to be placed is the minimum necessary for erosion protection according to the 1982 Standards for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control in New Jersey;

v. No material is placed in any location or in any manner so as to impair surface water flow into or out of any wetland area;

vi. Only suitable, clean, non-toxic fill material is used;

vii. The activity is a single and complete project, not associated with any other construction activity. For example, this activity cannot be used at the same location as a minor road crossing or a stormwater outfall structure; and

viii. The activity will not violate the Flood Hazard Area Control Act, N.J.S.A. 58:16A-50 or implementing rules at N.J.A.C. 7:13-1.

21. The construction or installation of new above ground utility lines including the installation of wood poles, steel poles, lattice towers, conductors, guy anchors, and pad mount transformers for the transport of electrical energy, telephone or telegraph messages, radio or television communication, or the discharge of fill to provide access to these new lines. The activities allowed by this Statewide General Permit shall comply with the following conditions:

i. The construction of the line (which constitutes a single and complete project of independent utility) including installation of structures, placement of fill for access and the clearing and maintenance of vegetation which would alter the character of the freshwater wetland, including the clearing of trees disturbs no more than one acre of wetlands or State open waters;

ii. The limits of clearing for construction is no more than 60 feet wide;

iii. The area to be maintained including vegetative clearing and maintenance of fill as a permanent right-of-way is a maximum of 20 feet in width;

iv. If located in exceptional resource value wetlands, the activity will not negatively impact associated water quality or the documented threatened or endangered species or its habitat;

v. When practicable, installation is done from outside wetland areas. If installation requires encroachment in wetlands, the activity shall be performed when the ground is frozen or extremely dry; otherwise only matting or track equipment shall be used. Matting will remain in place for no more than five days to the maximum extent practical;

vi. After completion the area used to gain access to the installation location is replanted as required in accordance with applicable BMPs with indigenous wetland species; and

vii. The activity is designed so as not to interfere with the natural hydraulic characteristics of the wetland and watershed.

22. (Reserved)

23. (Reserved)

24. The placement of bulkheads adjacent to human-made lagoons provided that:

i. The bulkhead is to be placed between two lawfully existing bulkheads which are not more than 75 feet apart;

ii. The connecting bulkhead shall not extend waterward of a straight line connecting the ends of the existing bulkheads;

iii. The width of wetlands on the subject lot, adjacent to the lagoon does not exceed an average of five feet;

iv. The total area of wetlands to be filled or disturbed does not exceed 375 square feet; and

v. The activities will not take place in a wetland of exceptional resource value as defined in N.J.A.C. 7:7A-2.5(b) or in a State open water defined as a special aquatic site (in 40 CFR 230.1).

25. The repair or alteration of malfunctioning individual subsurface sewage disposal systems provided:

i. There is no expansion or change in the use of the building or facility which will result in an increase in the volume of sanitary sewage;

ii. Alterations made to correct a malfunctioning system shall meet the requirements of N.J.A.C. 7:9A-3.3(c) and shall be undertaken only at the authorization of the administrative authority (the board of health having jurisdiction or its authorized agent acting on its behalf);

iii. It is demonstrated to the administrative authority that there is no alternative location onsite available with a seasonally high water table deeper than 1.5 feet from the existing ground surface which can support a properly functioning subsurface sewage disposal system; and

iv. The total wetland area to be affected by the repair or alteration does not exceed 0.25 acres.

(b) The Department may require an application for an Individual permit if the Department finds that additional permit conditions would not be sufficient, or that special circumstances make this action necessary to ensure compliance with the Act, this chapter, any permit or order issued pursuant thereto, or the Federal Act. In addition, when the regulated activity(ies) of a project exceed either the individual limits allowed under the issued Statewide general permits or the cumulative limit of stacked Statewide general permits, then the impacts of the entire project shall require an Individual Permit and will be reviewed under the standards at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-3.

(c) Under no circumstances shall a project's impacts be segmented and a portion of the project submitted for review under Statewide general permits while the remainder of the project is submitted for review under an Individual Permit.

Amended by R.1989 d.373, effective July 17, 1989.

See: 20 N.J.R. 1327(a), 21 N.J.R. 2024(a).

Added eight new Statewide General Permits, (a)10-17.
Amended by R.1990 d.446, effective September 4, 1990.

See: 22 N.J.R. 278(a), 22 N.J.R. 2753(a).

Expedited review process provided at (a)4 for hazardous waste remediation activities.

Public Notice: Request for public comments and public hearings.

See: 24 N.J.R. 975(a).

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.

See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

Changes initiated to create a program that is as stringent as that of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) in order to secure the assumption of the permit jurisdiction.

Public Notice: Notice of action on adoption of statewide general permits pursuant to Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act.

See: 24 N.J.R. 2252(a).

Case Notes

Denial of development permit was upheld where wetlands were determined to be part of surface water tributary system. *Jedan Associates v. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection*, 96 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 298.

Permit for construction within protected freshwater wetlands area requires proof that total length of disturbance will not exceed 100 feet. *Luchese v. Department of Environmental Protection*, 96 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 227.

Magnitude of wetland disturbance had to be determined on basis of total length of proposed roadway regardless of property boundaries. *Zimmer v. Department of Environmental Protection*, 93 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 199.

Property owner not entitled to permit sought to build residences on subdivided island lots. *McCoy v. Department of Environmental Protection*, 93 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 1.

Wetland was suitable habitat for endangered species even though none had been sighted on wetland; exceptional resource value. *Rossi v. Division of Coastal Resources*, 92 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 244.

Headwater wetlands not "swale"; no permit could be issued for filling wetlands. *Dykeman v. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection*, 92 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 217.

Developer was not entitled to Freshwater Wetlands General Permit Number 6 in order to construct parking deck; however, developer could be entitled to Statewide General Permit Number 7 to refill ditch. *Mall at IV Group v. Department of Environmental Protection*, 92 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 195.

Developers not authorized to fill fresh water wetlands pursuant to terms and conditions of statewide general permit. *Zaloom v. Division of Coastal Resources*, 92 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 50.

7:7A-9.3 Standards and Conditions for all Statewide General Permit Authorizations

(a) All regulated activities authorized under Statewide General Permits listed in N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.2 are subject to the specific conditions listed under each permit. In order to be authorized to conduct activities under these general permits, persons must comply with the standard conditions set forth at (b) below, as well as the conditions at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-13.1 and 13.2, the procedures in N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.4 and mitigation pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-14 where specified must be followed.

(b) The following standards must be met in order for a regulated activity to be authorized under the Statewide General Permits identified in N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9:

1. The request for authorization to fill or modify wetlands or State open waters is associated with a proposed project or construction activity and is not solely being requested for the purpose of eliminating a natural resource in order to avoid future regulation. For the purposes of this specific subsection, project shall mean the use and configuration of all buildings, pavements, roadways, storage areas and structures, and the extent of all activities associated with the proposal;

2. The regulated activity shall not occur in the proximity of a public water supply intake;

3. The regulated activity shall not jeopardize a threatened or endangered species and the activity shall not destroy, jeopardize, or adversely modify the historic or documented habitat of such species;

4. The activity will not occur in a component of either the Federal or State Wild and Scenic River System; nor in a river officially designated by Congress or the State Legislature as a "study river" for possible inclusion in either system while the river is in an official study status; and

5. The activity shall not adversely affect properties which are listed or are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. If the permittee, before or during the course of work authorized, encounters a probable historic property that has not been listed or determined eligible for listing on the National Register, but which may be eligible for listing in the National Register, the permittee shall immediately notify the Department and proceed as directed by the Department.

(c) The following conditions shall be met in order for a regulated activity to be authorized under the Statewide General Permits identified in N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9:

1. Any discharge of dredged or fill material shall consist of suitable material free from toxic pollutants (see section 307 of the Federal Act) in toxic amounts;

2. Any structure or fill authorized shall be maintained as specified in the construction plans;

3. In order to protect the fishery resources and/or the spawning of the downstream resident fish population, any activity within or adjacent to a stream channel which may introduce sediment into the stream or cause the stream to become turbid is prohibited during the time frames listed below or any subsequent updates to this listing as provided by the New Jersey Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife. The total restriction period will not exceed six months:

Timing restrictions:

| Stream Classification | Dates of Restriction |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Trout Production | |
| general brook/brown | September 15–March 15 |
| rainbow trout | February 1–April 30 |
| Trout Maintenance | March 15–June 15 |
| Trout Stocked | March 15–June 15 |
| Anadromous | |

American Shad—For the Delaware River upstream of the Delaware Memorial Bridge, and for tidal Rancocas and Raccoon Creeks

April 1–June 30 and
September 1–November 30

American Shad—For the Delaware River from the Delaware Bay to the Delaware Memorial Bridge, and tidal Maurice River

March 1–April 30 and
October 1–November 30

All other waterways classified for anadromous fish

April 1–June 30;

For waterways classified, on a case by case basis, as spawning areas for warm water fish

May 1–June 30.

4. During construction activities, all excavation must be monitored to check for the presence of acid-producing deposits pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:13-5.10 of the Flood Hazard Area Control Rules. If any such deposits are encountered, the mitigation and disposal standards described in N.J.A.C. 7:13-5.10 must be implemented. If any such deposits are encountered, an annual post-planting monitoring program shall be established to ensure that the reestablishment of vegetation in temporarily disturbed areas, shall have a minimum 85 percent plant survival and coverage rate after two complete growing seasons. Failure to achieve this survival rate will require implementation of additional corrective measures and/or reevaluation of the acid producing soils mitigation proposal to ensure the 85 percent survival rate requirement.

5. The activity will not result in a violation of the Flood Hazard Area Control Act, N.J.S.A. 58:16A-50 or implementing rules at N.J.A.C. 7:13-1.

6. Best management practices shall be followed whenever applicable.

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

New (c) added establishing conditions which must be met in order for a regulated activity to be authorized under the Statewide General Permits at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.

Case Notes

Proposed disturbance of isolated wetlands for construction of stormwater outfall and associated stormwater conveyance structure met

permit requirements. *Clothier v. Department of Environmental Protection*, 95 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 229.

7:7A-9.4 Use of multiple Statewide General Permits

(a) The Department may approve activities under the authority of more than one Statewide General Permit onsite as defined at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-1.4, Definitions. No activity is authorized by a Statewide General Permit without an approval letter from the Department indicating that a Statewide General Permit authorizes the particular activity at the particular location.

(b) The Department may issue an approval letter, authorizing activities covered under a single Statewide General Permit, for more than one location on a single property, provided that the total area of wetlands or State open waters disturbed or modified by activities covered by the Statewide General Permit does not exceed the maximum allowed under that general permit.

(c) The Department may approve activities covered by different general permits onsite, provided that the individual limits of each general permit are complied with and that the total area of wetlands, and State open waters disturbed or modified does not exceed one acre with the exception of Statewide general permit number 17. For example, the Department could approve on-site a minor road crossing disturbing 0.25 acres, stormwater outfall structures disturbing a total of 0.25 acres, and the filling of 0.5 acres of a ditch.

(d) An individual permit will be required for review of all regulated impacts onsite (as defined at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-1.4) if the cumulative impact of one acre will be exceeded by any combination of Statewide General Permits, or if the individual limits of Statewide General Permits 2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 19, 21, or 24 will be exceeded by the proposed activities.

(e) For Statewide General Permits at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.2(a)1, 3, 4, 5, 12, 14, 16 and 17, the Department may issue approvals for any number of activities on a single property covered by any number of these general permits. Later activities on the same property will also be eligible for approval under these Statewide general permits.

(f) Statewide general permit numbers 13, 15, 18, and 20 shall be authorized onsite only once every five years.

Amended by R.1989 d.373, effective July 17, 1989.
See: 20 N.J.R. 1327(a), 21 N.J.R. 2024(a).

At (c), added language referencing Statewide General Permits at 10 and 11 and examples.

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

Repealed and replaced (d).

7:7A-9.5 Application for activities under Statewide General Permits

(a) Except for Statewide General Permit number 25 pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.2(a)25, a person proposing to

engage in an activity covered by a Statewide General Permit shall provide a fee pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-16 and three copies of the following information to the Department at least 30 working days prior to commencement of work. Applicants seeking authorization pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.2(a)25, shall comply with the notification procedures found at (f) below:

1. An application form completed as per the instructions for a Statewide general permit;

2. Any information necessary to determine whether the conditions of the general permit will be satisfied, including, but not limited to, the following information:

i. Complete wetlands delineation including field delineation, folded plans at an appropriate scale, and wetlands field data sheets including soils and vegetation information (no formal report is required) for the area to be disturbed under the Statewide general permit application;

ii. A copy of the appropriate portion of the U.S. Geologic Survey Quadrangle (USGS) Map for the project site and a determination of the State Plane Coordinates for the center of the project. The accuracy of these coordinates should be within 50 feet of the actual point. For linear projects, the applicant shall provide State plane coordinates for the end-points of those projects which are 1,999 feet or less, and for those projects which are 2,000 feet and longer, additional coordinates at each 1,000 foot interval;

iii. For projects that are located in municipalities listed below at (a)2iii(1) and all amendments thereto, pursuant to (a)2iii(2) below, the applicant shall submit a signed statement certifying that the proposed activities will not result in any direct or indirect adverse impacts to Swamp pink (*Helonias bullata*) or its documented habitat; and

(1) Municipalities which have documented record of *Helonias bullata*:

Atlantic County

Egg Harbor Township
Town of Hammonton
Mullica Township

Burlington County

Evesham Township
Maple Shade Township
Medford Township
Pemberton Township
Southampton Township
Woodland Township
Medford Township

Camden County

Berlin Township

Clementon Borough
Gibbsboro Borough
Gloucester Township
Haddonfield Borough
Lindenwold Borough
Pine Hill Borough
Pine Valley Borough
Runnemede Borough
Voorhees Township
Waterford Township
Winslow Township

Cape May County

Cape May Point Borough
Dennis Township
Lower Township
Middle Township
Upper Township

Cumberland County

Bridgeton City
Downe Township
Fairfield Township
Hopewell Township
Lawrence Township
Millville City
Stow Creek Township
Upper Deerfield Township
Vineland City

Gloucester County

Clayton Borough
Deptford Township
East Greenwich Township
Elk Township
Franklin Township
Glassboro Borough
Mantua Township
Monroe Township
Newfield Borough
Washington Township
Wenonah Borough
West Deptford Township
Woodbury Heights Borough
Woolwich Township

Mercer County

West Windsor Township

Middlesex County

East Brunswick Township
Edison Township
New Brunswick City
Sayreville Borough

Monmouth County

Brielle Borough
Colts Neck Township
Freehold Township
Howell Township
Wall Township

Morris County

Mount Olive Township

Randolph Township
 Roxbury Township

Ocean County
 Barnegat Township
 Brick Township
 Dover Township
 Jackson Township
 Lacey Township
 Lakewood Township
 Little Egg Harbor Twp.
 Manchester Township
 Plumsted Township
 Stafford Township

Salem County
 Alloway Township
 Lower Alloways Township
 Pittsgrove Township
 Quinton Township
 Upper Pittsgrove Township

3. The Department will publish notice in the New Jersey Register of any amendments to the list at (a)2iii(1) above based upon updated information and make such information available at its offices and through the Office of Administrative Law.

4. Photographs of the portion of the property for which authorization is being requested.

(b) In addition, a person proposing to engage in an activity covered by a Statewide General Permit shall provide verification that a certified mail notice with return receipt requested and a complete copy of the application has been forwarded to the clerk of the municipality and that a certified mail notice with return receipt requested (white receipts or green cards are acceptable) has been forwarded to the environmental commission, or any public body with similar responsibilities, municipal planning board, county planning board, municipal construction official, and landowners within 200 feet of the legal boundary lines of the property(ies) on which the proposed activity will occur. Applicant must also provide a list of landowners within 200 feet. The notice shall contain:

1. A description of the proposed activity;
2. A description of the location of the activity including county, municipality, lot(s), block(s), and a plan of the site detailing existing structures, wetlands boundaries and proposed structures or activities, or both; and
3. The following statement:

“This letter is to provide you with legal notification that the referenced property owner is applying to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Land Use Regulation Element for a Statewide general permit.

A Statewide general permit will allow the property owner to conduct certain limited activities in freshwater wetlands or State open waters.

The complete Statewide general permit application package can be reviewed at either the municipal clerk’s office or by appointment at the Land Use Regulation Element office at the address listed below. The Department of Environmental Protection welcomes comments and any information that you may provide concerning the wetlands or open waters on the referenced parcel. Written comments should be submitted to the Department within 15 days of receiving notice. Comments will be accepted until the Department makes a decision on the application. Please submit your written comments along with a copy of this letter to:

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
 Land Use Regulation Element
 Bureau of Regulation
 PO Box 401
 5 Station Plaza
 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0401

att: (County in which the property is located) Section Chief

As part of the review of this application, Department personnel may perform a site inspection on your property. This site inspection will involve only that area within a maximum of 150 feet from the border of the applicant’s property. This site visit will involve a visual inspection and possibly minor soil borings using a 4’ diameter hand auger. The inspection will not result in any damage to the vegetation or improvements on your property.

The Department will notify your municipal environmental commission, planning board and the municipal construction official, as well as the county planning board of the Department’s approval or denial of the Statewide general permit application.”

(c) If the proposed project involves a linear facility such as a pipeline or road of more than .5 miles, instead of notifying all landowners within 200 feet of the property(ies) lines, the applicant shall give public notice by publication of a display advertisement. The advertisement shall be a minimum of four column inches and be published in at least one newspaper of local circulation and one of regional circulation in the municipality. In addition, notice shall be given to owners of all real property within 200 feet of any above surface structure related to the linear facility, such as a pumping station or treatment plant, power substations, grade separated interchanges or similar structures. This does not include utility support structures or conveyance lines.

(d) The Department, within 30 days of receipt of this notification, shall either return the package as incomplete or accept the application as administratively complete and notify in writing the person proposing to engage in the activity covered by a general permit as to whether they are covered by the Statewide General Permit, or whether an individual permit is required for the activity pursuant to (e) below. Activities begun or carried out without this written notification shall be a violation of the Statewide General Permit, the Act and this chapter. Issuance of authorizations shall be published in the DEPE Bulletin.

(e) Upon receiving an application for a general permit, the Department may require that the owner apply for an individual permit. Cases where an individual permit may be required include, but are not limited to:

1. The activity has more than a minimal adverse environmental effect;
2. The cumulative effects on the environment of the authorized activities are more than minimal;
3. The applicant or project is not in compliance with the conditions of the general permit; or
4. Public comment indicates that the application does not meet general permit criteria.

(f) A person proposing to engage in activities pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.2(a)25, repair or alteration of malfunctioning individual subsurface sewage disposal systems, shall submit written notice containing a description of the proposed activities to the Department at least 30 days prior to commencement of work. This notification shall include a description and plan of the activities and their location including municipality, county, block, and lot; and an approval from the Board of Health or its designated agent for the proposed activities. If the Department fails to notify the applicant within 30 days of receiving the notification, the activity shall be deemed to have been authorized, to the extent that the activity does not violate other statutes or regulations then in effect, and subject to any standard terms and conditions pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-9.3.

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

Changes initiated to create a program that is as stringent as that of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.) in order to secure the assumption of the permit jurisdiction.

Case Notes

Man-made system part of route of wetland; wetland not excluded from surface water tributary system; developer not entitled to permit. *Emanuel v. Department of Environmental Protection*, 93 N.J.A.R.2d (EPE) 122.

7:7A-9.6 Hearings and appeal

An applicant or other affected party may request an administrative hearing on any decision to issue or deny an authorization made by the Department pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-12.7.

New Rule: R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

7:7A-9.7 Duration of permit authorizations

(a) Authorizations for Statewide general permits shall be effective for a fixed term not to exceed five years from the date of authorization.

(b) The term of an authorization shall not be extended beyond the maximum duration specified in this section. However, if necessary, an authorization may be renewed through the application process set forth in this chapter.

(c) If the term of the authorization exceeds the expiration date of the issued general permit, and the permit upon which the authorization is based is modified to include more stringent standards or conditions, or is not reissued, the applicant must comply with the requirements of the new regulations by applying for a new GP authorization or an Individual permit. For those applicants whose activities will no longer comply with the new regulations, if prior to the expiration date of the GP, the applicant is able to document that the activity was either under contract or under construction, the Department will allow the applicant one additional year, from the date of expiration of the issued general permit (not the authorization date), to complete the authorized activity. If the GP authorizing a particular activity is reissued without amendments, or with amendments expanding the authorized scope of activities, the authorization remains effective for the authorized five-year term.

New Rule: R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

7:7A-9.8 Cancellation, withdrawal, resubmission and amendment of applications

(a) Applications may be cancelled by the Department; or withdrawn, amended, or resubmitted by an applicant.

(b) If an application is not complete for final review within 60 days of a request for additional information, the Department shall send a letter canceling the application and stating that the application will be purged from Department files and that a new application will be required to reactivate the Department's review. If the applicant sends the Department a letter documenting good cause for not supplying the requested information within the 60 day period the Department will grant an automatic extension of 30 days. The Department will grant additional 30-day extensions upon receiving a written request for such extension from the applicant.

1. All fees submitted with an application subsequently cancelled shall be non-refundable.

(c) An applicant may withdraw an application at any time in the application review process. All fees submitted with such applications are non-returnable when a significant portion of the review has been completed. In some cases however (see (d) below) the fees may be credited toward future applications.

(d) If an application is cancelled, denied or withdrawn, the applicant may resubmit an application for a revised project on the same site. The resubmitted application will be treated as a new application, although references may be made to the previously submitted application. A new fee will be required unless application is resubmitted within one year of the date of denial or withdrawal, in which case the original permit fee may be credited to the new application.

(e) A permit application may be amended at the applicant's discretion at any time as part of the permit review process. Copies of amendments and amended information shall be distributed by the applicant to the same person to whom copies of the initial application were distributed. All amendments to pending applications shall constitute a new submission and may at the Department's discretion require reinitiation of the entire review process.

New Rule: R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

SUBCHAPTER 10. PRE-APPLICATION CONFERENCES

7:7A-10.1 Purpose

A pre-application conference is optional, but highly recommended. It allows the Department to inform potential applicants of the various procedures and policies which apply to the freshwater wetlands, open water fill, stream encroachment, and coastal program permitting process. Department staff will candidly discuss the apparent strengths and weaknesses of the proposed permit application at this conference, but the Department shall in no way commit itself to approval or rejection of a proposed project as a result of these discussions.

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

Added reference to stream encroachment and coastal program.

7:7A-10.2 Request for a pre-application conference

(a) Potential applicants may request a pre-application conference with the Department. A request for a pre-application conference shall be made in writing and shall include a project description, a tax lot and block designation of the site, the location of the project site, including the municipality and county, the general location of freshwater wetlands and State regulated waters, a copy of the appropriate United States Soil Conservation Service map(s) locating the project, and a United States Geological Survey quadrangle map showing the site. The Department encourages the applicant to obtain a letter of interpretation prior to the pre-application conference.

(b) The Department shall, within 15 days of receipt of such request, schedule a pre-application conference.

Amended by R.1992 d.117, effective March 16, 1992.
See: 23 N.J.R. 338(a), 24 N.J.R. 975(b).

Further delineated information which should be part of the pre-application conference request.

7:7A-10.3 Discussion of information requirements

The Department shall candidly discuss the level of detail and areas of emphasis which will be necessary to allow the Department to review the application if one is submitted.

7:7A-10.4 Memorandum of record

(a) After the pre-application conference, the Department shall prepare a written memorandum of record summarizing the discussion of the apparent strengths and weaknesses of the proposed project, the apparent sensitivity of the land and water features of the site, and the level of detail and areas of emphasis necessary in the materials that the potential applicant may be required to submit as part of the application.

(b) The memorandum of record shall be mailed to the potential applicant or his or her agent, if designated in writing, and to the municipality, within 30 days after the pre-application conference. If the potential applicant submits an application, a copy of the memorandum of record shall be included with the application, and shall be included in the Department's file on the application.

(c) The memorandum of record shall not be construed as a decision of the Department. The Department is in no way bound by any information or statement recorded in the memorandum of record.

SUBCHAPTER 11. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

7:7A-11.1 Application contents for Individual Freshwater Wetlands and Open Water Fill Permits

(a) The Element will issue joint permits for projects requiring more than one Element permit whenever possible. It is strongly recommended that an applicant requiring more than one Element permit submit all applications materials simultaneously to facilitate joint permit processing. For example, the submission of all information necessary for both a Freshwater Wetlands permit and a Stream Encroachment permit at the same time will facilitate the issuance of a joint permit.

(b) The application for a freshwater wetland permit or open water fill permit shall include 10 copies of the following information:

1. A completed freshwater wetlands permit or open water fill permit application form including the names and addresses of all owners of property adjacent to the property which is the site of the proposed project. All activities which the applicant plans to undertake which are reasonably related to the same project should be included in the same permit application and will be considered simultaneously with the review of the individual permit. Only one application fee will be required to review all regulated activities in freshwater wetlands, State open waters and transition areas associated with the project;

2. A folded preliminary site plan or subdivision map of the proposed regulated activities, or other map of the site if no preliminary site plan or subdivision map exists;

3. A written description of the proposed regulated activity, the total area to be used, filled or modified, the total area of the freshwater wetland or State open waters potentially affected, identification of the watershed in which the project is located, and the relationship of the area affected to the area of the entire freshwater wetland or State open waters complex, for example, one-half acre to be filled of a 15 acre freshwater wetland. In addition, project elements affecting transition areas should be detailed;

4. A description of the source of any fill material and a description of the type, composition and quantity of the material. For dredge projects, submit the information as listed at N.J.A.C. 7:7A-4.3(c)2;

5. A description of alternatives to the proposed activity or discharge, including alternative sites, construction methods, methods of discharge, and reasons for rejecting the alternatives pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:7A-3, General Standards for Granting Individual Freshwater Wetlands and Open Water Fill Permits;

6. The purpose and intended use of the proposed activity, including whether it is water-dependent; a description of the uses of any structures to be erected; and a schedule for the progress and completion of the proposed activity;

7. A list of the approvals required by other Federal, interstate, State and local agencies for the activity, including all approvals or denials received;

8. A copy or photocopy of a portion of the U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute quadrangle map (available from the Department's Maps and Publications Office, PO Box 402, Trenton, NJ 08625-0402) showing the location of the property and its general vicinity, indicating and labeling the location of the proposed activity and the property boundaries, and a determination of the State Plane Coordinates for the center of the property. The accuracy of these coordinates should be within 50 feet of the actual point. For linear projects, the applicant shall provide State plane coordinates for the end-points of those projects which are 1,999 feet or less, and for those projects which are 2,000 feet and longer, additional coordinates at each 1,000 foot interval;

9. Verification that a complete copy of the application for an Individual permit, including all materials required by this subsection, has been submitted to the clerk of the municipality in which the proposed regulated activity will occur. Verification that a certified mail notice with return receipt requested (white receipt or green card is acceptable) and a copy of the vicinity map in (a)8 above have been forwarded to the environmental commission or any other public body with similar responsibilities, and planning board of the municipality in which the proposed regulated activity will occur; the planning board, environmental commission and county mosquito control agency of the county in which the proposed regulated activity will occur; landowners within 200 feet of the property or properties on which the proposed regulated activity will occur (applicant shall also provide a list of all landowners within 200 feet), and all persons as identified by the Department who requested to be notified of proposed regulated activities (the Department will furnish a list of such persons upon request), which notice may, at the applicant's option, be filed concurrently with notices required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq. A copy of the notice shall be included in the application to the Department. The notice shall include the following:

i. The name and address of the applicant and, if different, the address or location of the activity or activities regulated by the permit;

ii. The name, address, and telephone number of the applicant or agent to contact for further information;

iii. A brief description of the proposed activity, its purpose and intended use, so as to provide sufficient information concerning the nature of the activity to generate meaningful comments, including a description of the type of structures, if any, to be erected on fills, and a description of the type, composition and quantity of materials to be discharged;

iv. A plan and elevation drawing showing the general and specific site location (drawings may be 8.5 by 11 inches);

v. Any other information which is necessary to evaluate the likely impact of the proposed activity;

vi. The following statement:

"This letter is to provide you with legal notification that the referenced property owner is applying to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Land Use Regulation Element for an Individual Freshwater Wetlands permit.

An Individual permit will allow the property owner to conduct activities in freshwater wetlands or State open waters.