

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES**

WATER QUALITY GENERAL CERTIFICATION NO. 8567

**GENERAL CERTIFICATION FOR PROJECTS ELIGIBLE FOR US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
NATIONWIDE PERMIT NUMBER 12 (OIL AND GAS UTILITY LINE ACTIVITIES)**

Water Quality General Certification Number 8567 is issued in conformity with the requirements of Section 401, Public Laws 92-500 and 95-217 of the United States and subject to the North Carolina Regulations in 15A NCAC 02H .0500 and 15A NCAC 02B .0200 for the discharge of fill material to surface waters and wetland areas as described in the corresponding Nationwide Permit issued pursuant to 33 CFR 330 of the US Army Corps of Engineers regulations.

The State of North Carolina certifies that the specified category of activity will comply with water quality requirements and applicable portions of Sections 301, 302, 303, 306 and 307 of the Public Laws 92-500 and 95-217 if conducted in accordance with the conditions hereinafter set forth.

Effective date: March 15, 2026

Signed this day: December 15, 2025

By

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Richard E. Rogers, Jr.
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Richard E. Rogers, Jr.
Director

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GENERAL CERTIFICATION COVERAGE:

Activities authorized by Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) General Permits that are eligible for US Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 12 qualify for coverage under this General Certification as long as they comply with all of the Activity Specific and General Conditions of this Certification listed below.

Activities that are eligible for US Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 12 qualify for coverage under this General Certification unless they meet one of the thresholds listed below. Activities meeting any one (1) of the thresholds or circumstances listed below are not eligible for coverage under this General Certification and therefore require an Individual 401 Water Quality Certification from the Division of Water Resources (DWR).

- a) If any of the conditions of this General Certification cannot be met; or
- b) Total permanent impacts to streams greater than 500 linear feet within the entire utility project, or greater than or equal to 300 linear feet for any given stream channel; or
- c) Total temporary impacts to streams greater than 1,000 linear feet within the entire utility project; or
- d) Total permanent impacts to wetlands equal to or greater than one-half (1/2) acre within the entire utility project; or
- e) Total permanent impacts to open waters equal to or greater than one-half (1/2) acre within the entire utility project; or
- f) Any project proposing to satisfy compensatory mitigation through Permittee Responsible Mitigation; or
- g) Any project subject to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) review; or
- h) Any high-density project, as determined by the density thresholds and criteria specified in 15A NCAC 02H .1017(4) which triggers all of the following thresholds:
 - i. Proposes to disturb one acre or more of land (including a project that disturbs less than one acre of land that is part of a larger common plan of development or sale); and
 - ii. Has permanent wetland, stream, or open water impacts; and
 - iii. Is proposing new built-upon area; and
 - iv. Is not subject to a stormwater management plan review and approval under a state stormwater program¹ or a state-approved local government stormwater program², or has vested rights, exemptions, or other legacy rights or exemptions from state or locally-implemented stormwater programs or propose to satisfy state or locally-implemented stormwater programs through use of community in-lieu fee programs

For the purposes of the thresholds above (a-h), the Permittee shall account for all impacts from the Single and Complete Project (e.g. impacts from dedicated borrow and waste sites,

¹ e.g. Coastal Counties, HQW, ORW, or state-implemented Phase II NPDES

² e.g. Delegated Phase II NPDES, Water Supply Watershed, Nutrient-Sensitive Waters, or Universal Stormwater Management Program

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impacts from associated infrastructure/utilities) as determined by the US Army Corps of Engineers, and all secondary indirect impacts resulting from the proposed activities. **All impacts from a phase of the utility project designed and/or to be constructed at one time shall be accounted for as a project.**

Activities listed under Section I of this General Certification must receive a Certificate of Coverage from DWR prior to initiation of any activities covered by this General Certification.

I. NOTIFICATION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATE OF COVERAGE:

Activities listed in this Section must obtain a Certificate of Coverage from DWR prior to initiation of any activities covered by this General Certification.

If the activity is authorized or proposed for authorization by a Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) Major Permit, then skip to i) in this list.

- a) Total impacts greater than 500 linear feet to streams within the entire utility project; or
- b) Any permanent impacts (including stream relocations) to streams; or
- c) Total permanent impacts to wetlands equal to or greater than one-tenth (1/10) acre within the entire utility project; or
- d) Total permanent impacts to open waters and/or ditches subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) equal to or greater than one-tenth (1/10) acre within the entire utility project; or
- e) Any permanent impacts to waters, or to wetlands adjacent to waters, designated as: ORW (including SAV), HQW (including PNA), SA, WS-I, WS-II, Trout, or North Carolina or National Wild and Scenic River; or
- f) Any permanent impacts to coastal wetlands [15A NCAC 07H .0205], or Unique Wetlands (UWL) [15A NCAC 02B .0231]; or
- g) Any sediment and erosion control measures installed in wetlands or waters beyond the footprint of temporary and/or permanent wetland and/or waters impacts covered by this General Certification; or
- h) Any impacts to streams and/or open waters that are subject to state regulated riparian buffers in the Neuse, Tar-Pamlico, or Catawba River Basins or in the Randleman Lake, Jordan Lake or Goose Creek Watersheds (or any other basin or watershed with State Regulated Riparian Area Protection Rules [15A NCAC 02B .0714; 15A NCAC 02B .0734; 15A NCAC 02B .0614; 15A NCAC 02B .0724; 15A NCAC 02B .0267; 15A NCAC 02B .0607] in effect at the time of application) *unless*:
 - i. The activities are listed as “EXEMPT” or “DEEMED ALLOWABLE” from these rules; or
 - ii. A Buffer Authorization Certificate is issued by the NC Division of Coastal Management (DCM); or

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- iii. A Buffer Authorization Certificate, Certificate with Exception, or Minor Variance is issued by a delegated or designated local government implementing a state riparian buffer program pursuant to 143-215.23; or
- iv. Site access, equipment storage, and work is done solely from or in the water, avoiding all land disturbance in or near the buffer.
- i) Activities authorized or proposed for authorization by a Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) Major Permit **except for** projects that are covered by any one of the following criteria:
 - i. Boat Ramps and associated necessary infrastructure (i.e. roads and parking lots) that comply with all of the following:
 - A. Excavation or fill of wetlands and/or open water area is less than 500 square feet total; and
 - B. Excavation or fill of coastal wetlands (as defined in 15A NCAC 07H .0205) is equal to or less than 100 square feet;
 - ii. Living shorelines/marsh sills that comply with all of the following:
 - A. the landward edge of the sill does not extend waterward of the normal high water or normal water line more than 30 feet or five feet waterward of the existing wetlands whichever distance is greater; and
 - B. the activity will not involve the excavation or fill of any Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV); and
 - C. the activity will not involve the excavation or fill of significant shellfish resources (as identified by the Division of Marine Fisheries); and
 - D. the activity does not result in any fill landward of the toe of the sill alignment; or
 - iii. All other shoreline protection measures not covered by item ii above that comply with all of the following:
 - A. tie into existing bulkheads, land, or other shoreline protection measures or do not extend waterward of the normal high water or normal water line more than 10 feet; and
 - B. the activity will not involve the excavation or fill of any Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV); and
 - C. the activity will not involve the excavation or fill of significant shellfish resources (as identified by the Division of Marine Fisheries); and
 - D. Excavation or fill of wetlands and/or open water area is less than 500 square feet total; and
 - E. Excavation or fill of coastal wetlands (as defined in 15A NCAC 07H .0205) is equal to or less than 100 square feet;
 - iv. Piers and docks designed to accommodate up to, but not exceeding, 10 vessels that comply with all of the following:
 - A. the water depth is equal to or greater than two feet of water at normal low water level or normal water level (whichever is applicable); and
 - B. they are not located within Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW) as defined in 15A NCAC 02B. 0225;

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- v. Any other projects that involve only shading of waters or wetlands that are not covered by item (iv) above;
- vi. Maintenance dredging to restore the documented historical dimensions of the dredged channel of less than 0.5 acres of open water or non-vegetated wetlands, that comply with all of the following:
 - A. the activity will not involve the excavation or fill of any Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV); and
 - B. the activity will not involve the excavation or fill of significant shellfish resources (as identified by the Division of Marine Fisheries); and
- vii. Utility lines as long as all impacts are temporary;
- viii. New development (impacts shall include the entire project, including but not limited to: boat ramps, bulkheads or other shoreline stabilization measures) that comply with all of the following:
 - A. Excavation or fill of non-coastal wetlands and/or open water area is less than 1/10 acre total; and
 - B. Excavation or fill within a Coastal Shoreline Area of Environmental Concern (AEC) is no more than 2,000 square feet

For the purposes of the thresholds above (a-i), the Permittee shall account for all impacts from the Single and Complete Project (e.g. impacts from dedicated borrow and waste sites, impacts from associated infrastructure/utilities) as determined by the US Army Corps of Engineers, and all secondary indirect impacts resulting from the proposed activities. All impacts from a phase of the utility project designed and/or to be constructed at one time shall be accounted for as a project.

A note: In accordance with 15A NCAC 02H .0506(c) and Session Law 2017-10, compensatory mitigation is required for losses from the entire single and complete project of greater than or equal to 300 linear feet of perennial streams and/or greater than or equal to 0.10 acre of wetlands, whether a Certificate of Coverage or an Individual is required.

II. ACTIVITY SPECIFIC CONDITIONS

1. Any construction corridor that is parallel to a stream or open water shall not be closer than 10 feet to the top of bank or ordinary high-water mark. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
2. Where there are temporary or permanent impacts from stream crossings, utility lines shall cross the stream channel at a near-perpendicular direction (i.e., between 75 degrees and 105 degrees to the stream bank). Utility line replacements within existing easements or alignments may follow the existing alignments. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
3. Construction corridors in wetlands and/or across stream channels shall be minimized to the maximum extent practicable and shall not exceed 50 feet wide.

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For construction corridors in wetlands and across stream channels, stumps shall be grubbed only as needed to install the utility line, and remaining stumps shall be cut off at grade level. The general stripping of topsoil within wetlands along the construction corridor is prohibited. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*

4. Permanent maintained access corridors in wetlands and across stream channels shall be restricted to the minimum width practicable and shall not exceed 30 feet wide. For parallel adjacent lines with less than 20 feet between them, the permanent maintained corridor shall be restricted to the minimum width practicable not to exceed 15 feet from the edge of the outer most lines. Parallel adjacent lines with 20 feet or more between them shall be treated as individual lines with the access corridor the minimum width practicable not to exceed 30 feet wide for each line. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
5. For all utility lines constructed within wetlands, an anti-seep collar shall be placed at the downstream (utility line gradient) wetland boundary and every 150 feet up the gradient until the utility exits the wetland. Anti-seep collars may be constructed with class B concrete, compacted clay, PVC pipe, or metal collars. Wetland crossings that are directionally drilled, and perpendicular wetland crossings that are open cut and less than 150 feet long do not require anti-seep collars. The compacted clay shall have a specific infiltration of 1×10^{-5} cm/sec or less. A section and plan view diagram is attached for the anti-seep collars.

The following specifications shall apply to class B concrete:

- i. Minimum cement content, sacks per cubic yard with rounded coarse aggregate 5.0
- ii. Minimum cement content, sacks per cubic yard with angular coarse aggregate 5.5
- iii. Maximum water-cement ratio gallons per sack 6.8
- iv. Slump range 2" to 4"
- v. Minimum strength - 28-day psi 2,500

Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)

6. The permittee shall restore wetland contours to pre-construction conditions. Any excess material will be removed to a high ground disposal area.

The mixing of topsoil and subsoils within the wetlands along utility corridors shall be minimized to the greatest extent practical. During excavation, the soils shall be placed on fabric to minimize impacts whenever possible. Topsoil excavated from utility trenches will be piled separately from subsoils and will be backfilled into the trench only after the subsoils have been placed and compacted. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*

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III. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. For all activities that require a Certificate of Coverage under Section I of this General Certification: The Certificate of Coverage is issued specifically for the plans, specifications, and associated application materials for the proposed project approved by DWR by the issuance of the COC. Any final construction plans for a project must include or reference the application and plans submitted to the DWR. The Permittee must evaluate all other acquired permits to ensure that they are consistent with the plans submitted to the DWR, and all relative impacts are accounted for and shown on the final construction plans. Any modifications or additional impacts to streams and/or wetlands within the project require the permittee to notify the DWR and may require submission of a new application package with the appropriate fee to redetermine eligibility under this General Certification. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b)(2) and (3); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
2. If the property is sold, the Permittee shall provide the new owner with a copy of this General Certification and all plans and specifications incorporated by reference for all activities that require a Certificate of Coverage under Section I of this General Certification. The Permittee may transfer a certificate of coverage issued under this General Certification to the new owner by submitting a letter to the Division with the following statement: *"At the time the property is transferred, the terms and conditions of this 401 Individual Water Quality General Certification, including the responsibility to ensure compliance, are binding on the new owner(s) of the property."* The letter shall be signed and dated by both the transferee and the new owner. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0507(d)(2)*
3. For all projects that include multiple parcels and/or lots, including transportation and/or utility-related projects installed as infrastructure for multiple parcels and/or lots, deed notifications or similar mechanisms shall be placed on all lots/parcels that include jurisdictional wetlands, streams, open waters, and state-regulated riparian buffers within the overall project boundaries. These mechanisms shall be put in place at the time of recording of the property or individual parcels, whichever is appropriate. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0502(a); 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
4. The Permittee shall allow the Director, or an authorized representative (including an authorized contractor acting as a representative of the Director), upon the presentation of credentials and other documents as may be required by law, to: *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0502(e); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
 - a. Enter, at reasonable times, upon the Permittee's premises where a regulated facility or activity is located or conducted, or where records must be kept under the conditions of this certificate;
 - b. Have access to and copy, at reasonable times, any records that must be kept under the conditions of this certificate;
 - c. Inspect at reasonable times any facilities, equipment (including monitoring and control equipment), practices, or operations regulated or required under this certificate; and

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- d. Sample or monitor at reasonable times, for the purposes of assuring certificate compliance or as otherwise authorized by the Clean Water Act, any substances or parameters at any location
5. In accordance with 15A NCAC 02H .0506(c) and Session Law 2017-10, compensatory mitigation is required for losses from the entire single and complete project of greater than or equal to 300 linear feet of perennial streams and/or greater than or equal to 0.10 acre of wetlands. For linear publicly owned and maintained transportation projects that have not been determined to be part of a larger common plan of development, the stream mitigation threshold is applied per perennial stream. The Compensatory Mitigation Responsibility Transfer (CMRT) Form(s) attached to the Certificate of Coverage issued for a specific project, shall be completed and provided to DWR prior to **any** impacts occurring. If the Mitigation Provider specified in the CMRT Form(s) changes after issuance of the Certificate of Coverage or Individual Certificate with MRT Form, then the Permittee shall request a revised CMRT Form from DWR prior to conducting any impacts. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(c); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
6. For High Density Development projects subject to a State, or State approved Local Government Delegated Program, the Permittee shall secure an *approved* stormwater management plan (SMP) from the appropriate agency **before any** impacts authorized in this Certification occur. Before any permanent building or other permanent structure is occupied at the site the permanent stormwater management control measures or devices for the building and/or structures shall be constructed and operational. If any Erosion and Sediment Control devices share locations with any of the Stormwater Control Measures, the area must be restored to the approved stormwater design condition within 30 days of close-out of the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b)(2) and (3); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
7. For phased projects with conceptual future phases, when final design plans are completed, the Permittee shall ensure that final designs shall reflect all appropriate avoidance and minimization of impacts to wetlands, streams, and other surface waters. For projects that have been issued a Certificate of Coverage under this General Certification, the Permittee shall submit a request for a modified Certificate of Coverage if the impacts from the final design differ from those identified in the existing Certificate of Coverage. No construction activities (including temporary impacts) shall begin at such impact locations until a new Certificate of Coverage has been secured. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b)(2) and (3); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
8. All wetlands, streams, and surface waters located within the limits of disturbance and within 50 feet of the limits of disturbance/construction area on the project site shall be clearly marked (example- orange fabric fencing) prior to any land disturbing activities. The marking/fencing shall be maintained until the project or project phase is completed. Impacts to areas within the marked area/fencing are prohibited unless otherwise authorized by this certification. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b)(2); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*

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9. When requested by DWR, the Permittee and/or authorized agent shall schedule a pre-construction meeting with DWR, shall contact the appropriate DWR Regional Office upon project commencement of construction, shall submit a Certificate of Completion and/or shall provide as-built documentation. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0502(e); 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
10. For projects that include draining a pond or lake, appropriate erosion and sediment control measures shall be utilized while draining the pond or lake to ensure limited impact to downstream waters as well as to native aquatic species. Such measures shall also be utilized to avoid any sediment release into downstream waters as a result of pond draining. The permittee shall observe any natural channel re-establishment, or utilize natural channel construction techniques, to ensure that the jurisdictional stream channel above and below the drained pond remain stable, and that no additional impacts occur within the natural stream channel as a result of draining the pond. The Permittee shall consult with NCWRC prior to the relocation or release of any aquatic species during pond draining or dam removal activities. During pond or lake refill, sufficient flow shall be continually released to the receiving stream to ensure aquatic life survival and maintenance of biological integrity. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b)(2); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
11. The permittee shall report to the appropriate DWR Regional Office any noncompliance with, and/or any violation of, stream or wetland standards [15A NCAC 02B .0200], including but not limited to sediment impacts to streams or wetlands. Information shall be provided orally within 24 hours (or the next business day if a weekend or holiday) from the time the permittee became aware of the non-compliance circumstances. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
12. A copy of this General Certification, and when applicable, the Certificate of Coverage, shall be retained on site during the construction and maintenance of this project, or with the project manager, and be available for inspection at all times. The Permittee shall require its contractors and/or agents to comply with the terms and conditions of this permit in the construction and maintenance of this project and shall provide each of its contractors and/or agents associated with the construction or maintenance of this project with a copy of this General Certification. If the Permittee becomes aware of any inability to comply with any of the conditions of this General Certification, they must notify the appropriate Regional Office within 24 hours (or the next business day if a weekend or holiday) from the time the Permittee becomes aware of the circumstances. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
13. No additional temporary or permanent impacts from waste, spoil, solids, fill, excavation, or staging of equipment, shall occur in wetlands or waters beyond the footprint of the impacts (including temporary impacts) identified in a Certificate of Coverage; or for projects that do not require a Certificate of Coverage; beyond the thresholds established for use of this General Certification. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506; 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*

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14. All activities shall be in compliance with any applicable State Regulated Riparian Buffer Rules in Chapter 2B of Title 15A in the North Carolina Administrative Code. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
15. When applicable, all construction activities shall be performed and maintained in full compliance with G.S. Chapter 113A Article 4 (Sedimentation Pollution Control Act of 1973). Regardless of applicability of the Sedimentation Pollution Control Act, all projects shall incorporate appropriate Best Management Practices for the control of sediment and erosion so that no violations of state water quality standards, statutes, or rules occur.

Design, installation, operation, and maintenance of all sediment and erosion control measures shall be equal to or exceed the requirements specified in the most recent version of the *North Carolina Erosion and Sediment Control Planning and Design Manual*, or the *North Carolina Department of Transportation Erosion and Sediment Control Design and Construction Manual*.

Appropriate measures should be installed prior to any land clearing activities to protect wetlands, streams, and/or buffers from turbidity and/or sedimentation. These measures should be routinely inspected and properly maintained, and excavated materials should be contained outside wetland, stream, and/or buffer boundaries.

For installation of bridges that involve driving or drilling activities within stream channels, open waters, or along streambanks turbidity curtains shall be installed within the surface water.

All devices shall be maintained on all construction sites, borrow sites, and waste pile (spoil) sites, including contractor-owned or leased borrow pits associated with the project. Sufficient materials required for stabilization and/or repair of erosion control measures and stormwater routing and treatment shall be on site at all times.

For borrow pit sites, the erosion and sediment control measures shall be designed, installed, operated, and maintained in accordance with the most recent version of the *North Carolina Surface Mining Manual*. Reclamation measures and implementation shall comply with the reclamation in accordance with the requirements of the Sedimentation Pollution Control Act and the Mining Act of 1971.

If the project occurs in waters or watersheds classified as Primary Nursery Areas (PNAs), SA, WS-I, WS-II, High Quality Waters (HQW), or Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW), then the sedimentation and erosion control designs shall comply with the requirements set forth in 15A NCAC 04B .0124, *Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds*. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b)(2); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0200; 15A NCAC 02B .0231*

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16. Sediment and Erosion Control Measures (S&EC) in wetlands or waters should be avoided to the maximum extent possible and any S&EC occurring in wetlands or waters shall be restored to pre-existing conditions upon completion of the project. The Permittee shall utilize sediment and erosion control measures that avoid and minimize the need for the placement of silt fence along streams at the normal water level. Where measures are placed within authorized impact areas then placement of such measures shall not be conducted in a manner that results in a loss of function of any wetlands, streambeds, or streambanks. Any erosion control measures, including silt fence, installed within wetlands shall be removed from wetlands and the natural grade restored and revegetated within two (2) months of the date the appropriate sediment and erosion control program has released the specific area within the project to ensure wetland standards are maintained upon completion of the project. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0200; 15A NCAC 02B .0231*
17. Erosion control matting shall not be placed within a stream bed. Erosion control matting that incorporates plastic mesh and/or plastic twine shall not be used along streambanks or within wetlands. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
18. If the project is covered by NPDES Construction Stormwater Permit Number NCG010000 or NPDES Construction Stormwater Permit Number NCG250000, full compliance with permit conditions including the erosion and sedimentation control plan, inspections and maintenance, self-monitoring, record keeping and reporting requirements is required. *15A NCAC 02H .0506(b) and (c); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
19. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) shall maintain full compliance with the conditions related to construction activities and post construction stormwater design, construction and maintenance, within the most recent version of their Individual NPDES Stormwater Permit Number NCS000250. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0200; 15A NCAC 02B .0231*
20. For projects impacting waters classified by the NC Environmental Management Commission as High Quality Waters (HQW), including Water Supply I or II (WSI, WSII) and/or as Outstanding Resources Waters (ORW) post construction stormwater shall be managed in accordance with 15A NCAC 02B .0224(d) or .0225 as applicable.

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21. All work in or adjacent to streams, ponds, lakes, and reservoirs shall be conducted so that the work area is isolated from surface waters. Approved best management practices from the most current version of the DEMLR [NC Erosion and Sediment Control Planning and Design Manual](#), or the *NC Department of Transportation Best Management Practices For Construction and Maintenance Activities Manual*, such as sandbags, rock berms, cofferdams, pump-arounds, and other diversion structures shall be used to minimize excavation in flowing water. Water that comes in contact with the work area shall be treated through an appropriate sediment/erosion control measure (sediment basin, filter bag, etc) prior to discharging to a surface water. All temporarily disturbed areas for the purpose of isolation/dewatering shall be restored to original grade, including each stream's original cross-sectional dimensions, planform pattern, and longitudinal bed profile. All temporarily impacted sites shall be restored and stabilized with native vegetation as practicable. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0200*
22. For all activities that require a Certificate of Coverage under Section I of this General Certification: *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 04B .0125*

The Permittee shall allow NCWRC and/or DMF to implement pre-construction species surveys and relocations. The Permittee shall adhere to NCWRC and/or DMF recommended moratoria. If NCWRC and/or DMF provides recommended design modifications to protect federally/state listed aquatic species, the permittee shall implement these to the degree possible. If the recommended conditions cannot be met, a project proponent may apply for coverage under an individual 401 water quality certification.

For all other activities:

Work within a designated trout watershed as identified by the Wilmington District of the US Army Corps of Engineers or work within identified state or federal endangered or threatened species habitat shall be coordinated with NCWRC and/or DMF prior to initiating of project activities.

The Permittee shall adhere to NCWRC and/or DMF recommended moratoria. Exceptions to this condition require written approval by the resource agency responsible for the given moratorium. If activities must occur during periods of high biological activity of aquatic species (e.g. sea turtle nesting, fish spawning, or bird nesting) all biological surveys, relocations, and/or monitoring requested by the state agency must be conducted.

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23. Culverts shall be designed and installed in such a manner that the original stream profiles are not altered and allows for aquatic life movement during low flows. The dimension, pattern, and profile of the stream above and below a pipe or culvert shall not be modified by widening the stream channel or by reducing the depth of the stream in connection with the construction activity. The width, height, and gradient of a proposed culvert shall be such as to pass the average historical low flow and spring flow without adversely altering flow velocity. If the width of the culvert is wider than the stream channel, the culvert shall include multiple boxes/pipes, baffles, benches and/or sills to maintain the natural width of the stream channel. If multiple culverts/pipes/barrels are used, low flows shall be accommodated in one culvert/pipe and additional culverts/pipes shall be installed such that they receive only flows above bankfull.

Placement of culverts and other structures in streams shall also meet one of the following requirements:

- a. For structures less than 72" in diameter/width and in area where topographic constraints dictate culvert slopes will be greater than 2.5%, culverts shall be installed "at grade" such that low flow conditions in the stream are maintained provided that all alternative options for flattening the slope have been investigated and aquatic life movement/connectivity has been provided when possible (e.g. rock ladders, cross-vanes, sills, baffles etc.); or
- b. When bedrock is present in culvert locations, culvert burial is not required, provided that there is documentation of the presence of bedrock.
- c. For all other culverts:
 - i. Culverts with a diameter greater than 48 inches shall be below the elevation of the streambed by one foot
 - ii. Culverts with diameter less than or equal to 48 inches shall be below the streambed by 20% of the culvert diameter

If a culvert outlet is submerged within a pool or scour hole and designed to provide for aquatic passage, then culvert burial into the streambed is not required.

Documentation such as a location map of the culvert, culvert profile drawings, slope calculations, geotechnical reports, photographs, etc. shall be provided to DWR upon written request.

For culvert replacements within the same location/footprint, and of similar length, culverts shall be designed and installed to meet the above requirements of this Condition unless prohibited by existing conditions on site, such as existing infrastructure or topographic constraints.

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Installation of culverts in wetlands shall ensure continuity of water movement and be designed to adequately accommodate high water or flood conditions. When roadways, causeways, or other fill projects are constructed across FEMA-designated floodways or wetlands, openings such as culverts or bridges shall be provided to maintain the natural hydrology of the system as well as prevent constriction of the floodway that may result in destabilization of streams or wetlands.

The establishment of native woody vegetation and other soft stream bank stabilization techniques shall be used where practicable instead of rip-rap or other bank hardening methods. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*

24. Bridge piles and bents shall be constructed using driven piles (hammer or vibratory) or drilled shaft construction methods. More specifically, jetting or other methods of pile driving are prohibited under this General Certification. *15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0200*
25. Unless already approved by an NPDES permit, bridge deck drains shall not discharge directly into the stream. Stormwater shall be directed across the bridge and pre-treated through site-appropriate means to the maximum extent practicable (e.g. grassed swales, pre-formed scour holes, vegetated buffers, etc.) before entering the stream. This condition may be waived with prior written approval from the NCDWR. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*
26. Application of fertilizer to establish planted/seeded vegetation within disturbed riparian areas and/or wetlands shall be conducted at agronomic rates and shall comply with all other Federal, State and Local regulations. Fertilizer application shall be accomplished in a manner that minimizes the risk of contact between the fertilizer and surface waters. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0231*
27. Discharging hydroseed mixtures and washing out hydroseeders and other equipment in, or adjacent to, surface waters is prohibited. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H.0506(b)*
28. If concrete is used during construction (including bulkhead components, such as deadman anchors, tie-back systems and concrete caps), then all necessary measures shall be taken to isolate the concrete from waters of the state by maintaining a dry work area to prevent direct contact between curing concrete and surface waters. Drill slurry and water that inadvertently contacts uncured concrete shall not be discharged to waters of the state. Water that inadvertently contacts uncured concrete shall not be discharged to surface waters due to the potential for elevated pH and possible aquatic life and fish kills. Any water that contacts uncured concrete shall be captured, treated, and disposed of properly. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0200; 15A NCAC 02B .0231*

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29. All temporary pipes, culverts, rip-rap pads etc. in streams shall be installed so as not to restrict stream flow or installed in such a manner that restricts aquatic life movement during low flow conditions. All temporary pipes and/or culverts shall be installed as outlined in the most recent edition of the *North Carolina Erosion and Sediment Control Planning and Design Manual* or the *North Carolina Surface Mining Manual* or the *North Carolina Department of Transportation Best Management Practices for Construction and Maintenance Activities*. Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)
30. All temporary fill and temporary culverts shall be removed, and the impacted area shall be returned to natural conditions, within 60 calendar days after the temporary impact is no longer necessary. The impacted areas shall be restored to original grade, including each stream's original cross-sectional dimensions, planform pattern, and longitudinal bed profile. All temporarily impacted sites shall be restored and stabilized with native vegetation when practicable. For all areas where wetlands are impacted by temporary roads constructed by temporary fill material, the Permittee shall remove the fill material and conduct activities necessary to restore preconstruction hydrology by addressing soil compaction. When temporary fill has been added to wetlands, or heavy equipment has been placed within a wetland, the Permittee shall ensure restoration of preconstruction soil conditions when restoring wetland areas. Upon restoration of the wetland, the Permittee shall inspect the area quarterly for a minimum of two years to document successful restoration. The Permittee shall provide documentation of inspections to DWR when requested. The monitoring requirement can be relieved with review and written approval by DWR. If the area is not restored to preconstruction conditions the impacts shall be considered permanent, and the Permittee shall request a modified Certificate of Coverage from DWR. With prior written approval from DWR, removal of temporary fill and temporary culverts and restoration of the impacted area may be postponed to accommodate moratorium periods. Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)
31. Demolition of existing structures, such as culvert or bridge removal, shall be conducted to ensure water quality standards are maintained. NCDOT activities shall adhere to NCDOT's *Best Management Practices for Construction and Maintenance Activities*. Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0200
32. Any rip-rap or other armoring materials required for proper culvert placement, stream stabilization, or restoration of temporarily disturbed areas shall be restricted to the area directly impacted by the construction activity covered by this General Certification. All rip-rap or other non-natural armoring material placed in streams shall be placed such that the original streambed elevation and streambank contours are restored, and that the finished elevation of the rip rap shall not exceed that of the original stream bed. All rip-rap or other armoring materials shall consist of clean rock or masonry material free of debris or toxic pollutants. Placement of rip-rap or other armoring materials shall not result in destabilization of the stream bed or banks upstream or downstream of the area or be installed in a manner that precludes aquatic life passage. Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)

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33. Any rip-rap or other non-natural armoring material (i.e. gabion baskets, revetments, bulkheads, seawalls, retaining walls) used for stream or shoreline stabilization shall be of a size and density to prevent movement by wave, current action, or stream flows, and shall consist of clean rock or masonry material free of debris or toxic pollutants. Rip-rap or other armoring materials shall not be installed in the streambed except in specific areas required for velocity control and to ensure structural integrity of bank stabilization measures. Any rip-rap or other armoring materials placed in the streambed shall be such that the finished elevation of the rip rap or other armoring materials shall not exceed that of the original stream bed. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0201*
34. Rip-rap groins proposed in accordance with 15A NCAC 07H .1401 (NC Division of Coastal Management General Permit for construction of Wooden and Rip-rap Groins in Estuarine and Public Trust Waters) shall meet all the specific conditions for design and construction specified in 15A NCAC 07H .1405. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 07H .1400*
35. All mechanized equipment operated near surface waters shall be inspected and maintained regularly to prevent contamination of surface waters from fuels, lubricants, hydraulic fluids, or other toxic materials. Construction shall be staged in order to minimize the exposure of equipment to surface waters to the maximum extent practicable. Fueling, lubrication, and general equipment maintenance shall be performed in a manner to prevent, to the maximum extent practicable, contamination of surface waters by fuels and oils. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0200*
36. Heavy equipment working in wetlands shall be placed on mats or non-impact equipment shall be used to ensure no disturbance and/or compaction of soil from equipment except within the footprint of the impacts covered by this Certification. Heavy equipment necessary for in stream activities shall be operated from the banks to the maximum extent practical and in no cases shall cause unstable stream banks or a violation of water quality standards. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC 02B .0231*
37. In accordance with G.S. 143-215.85(b), the Permittee shall report any petroleum spill of 25 gallons or more; any spill regardless of amount that causes a sheen on surface waters; any petroleum spill regardless of amount occurring within 100 feet of surface waters; and any petroleum spill less than 25 gallons that cannot be cleaned up within 24 hours. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); N.C.G.S 143-215.85(b)*
38. For all dam removal projects meeting the definition under G.S. 143-215.25 and requirements under G.S. 143-215.27 of a professionally supervised dam removal, the applicant shall provide documentation that any sediment that may be released has similar or lower level of contamination than sediment sampled from downstream of the dam in accordance with Session Law 2017-145. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0502; 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c); 15A NCAC02B .0200; S.L. 2017-145;*

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39. The Permittee and their authorized agents shall conduct all activities in a manner consistent with State water quality standards (including any requirements resulting from compliance with §303(d) of the Clean Water Act), and any other appropriate requirements of State and Federal Law. *Citation: 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b); 15A NCAC 02H .0507(c)*

IV. DEFINITIONS

Temporary Impacts: Any impact that temporarily disturbs a stream, wetland, or open water and returns the disturbed area to pre-construction conditions, form and function or improved form and function within a duration that will ensure minimal disturbance to ecological function, including biological transport, migration, and reproduction.

Permanent Impacts: Any impact that modifies the form or function of a stream, wetland, or open water in a permanent manner, or for a duration that is sufficiently long to disrupt natural processes within the surface water. Examples include culverts, fill, riprap, streambank or shoreline stabilization, dredging, relocations, restoration. Permanent impacts may (1) improve the function of surface waters, such as stream and wetland restorations, (2) be neutral to the function of the surface waters, or (3) cause a reduction or loss of function of surface waters.

Secondary Indirect Impacts – Effects that are caused by the activity and are later in time or farther removed in distance but are still reasonably foreseeable. Secondary indirect impacts may (1) improve the function of surface waters, such as stream and wetland restorations, (2) be neutral to the function of the surface waters, or (3) cause a reduction or loss of function of surface waters.

Stream Restoration - the process of converting an unstable, altered, or degraded stream corridor, including adjacent riparian zone and flood-prone areas, to its natural or referenced stable conditions considering recent and future watershed conditions. This process also includes restoring the geomorphic dimension, pattern, and profile as well as biological and chemical integrity, including transport of water and sediment produced by the stream's watershed in order to achieve dynamic equilibrium. 'Reference' or 'reference reach' means a stable stream that is in dynamic equilibrium with its valley and contributing watershed. A reference reach can be used to develop natural channel design criteria for stream restoration projects.

Stream Relocation - Stream relocation is when a stream is moved laterally to a new location to allow a project, or part of a project, to be constructed in the stream's former location. For permitting purposes, stream relocations may be considered a loss of function pursuant to 15A NCAC 2H .0506(c) depending on the documented condition and location of the existing stream and the proposed design and success of the relocated stream.

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V. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

In accordance with 15A NCAC 02H .0506(b), the Director of the North Carolina Division of Water Resources may require submission of an application for an Individual Certification for any project if, based on the unique characteristics of the project, it is determined by the Director that the conditions in this general certification will not ensure that the proposed activity will comply with state water quality standards, which includes designated uses, numeric criteria, narrative criteria and the state's antidegradation policy.

This General Certification does not relieve the permittee of the responsibility to obtain all other required Federal, State, or Local approvals before proceeding with the project, including those required by, but not limited to, Sediment and Erosion Control, Non-Discharge, Water Supply Watershed, Division of Coastal Management and Trout Buffer regulations.

This General Certification, and any associated certificates of coverage, neither grants nor affirms any property right, license, or privilege in any waters, or any right of use in any waters. This General Certification does not authorize any person to interfere with the riparian rights, littoral rights, or water use rights of any other person and does not create any prescriptive right or any right of priority regarding any usage of water. This General Certification shall not be interposed as a defense in any action respecting the determination of riparian or littoral rights or other rights to water use. No consumptive user is deemed by virtue of this General Certification to possess any prescriptive or other right of priority with respect to any other consumptive user regardless of the quantity of the withdrawal or the date on which the withdrawal was initiated or expanded.

This General Certification shall expire on the same day as the expiration date of the corresponding Nationwide Permit. The conditions in effect on the date of issuance of Certification for a specific project shall remain in effect for the life of the project, regardless of the expiration date of this General Certification. For purposes of this paragraph for projects that do not require issuance of a certificate of coverage, the date of issuance shall be deemed to be the date that activities covered by this General Certification were initiated. This General Certification is rescinded when the US Army Corps of Engineers reauthorizes the corresponding Nationwide Permit or when deemed appropriate by the Director of the Division of Water Resources, consistent with the provisions of 15A NCAC 2H .0507.

Non-compliance with or violation of the conditions herein set forth by a specific project may result in revocation of any Certificate of Coverage issued under this General Certification for the project and may also result in criminal and/or civil penalties.

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