



December 14, 2020

Sage L. Joyce
Montana State Program Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District
10 West 15th Street, Suite 2200
Helena, Montana 59626-9705

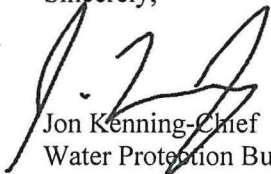
Re: Montana Department of Environmental Quality 401 Water Quality Certification of Proposed Army Corps of Engineers 2020 Nationwide Permits, General Conditions, and Regional Conditions

Dear Ms. Joyce:

The attachment to this letter (Parts A-E) constitutes the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's position on the subject Nationwide Permits. It should not result in an undue burden to either of our agencies, while still providing adequate water quality protection. Also, please find enclosed the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's December 5, 2000, guidelines for materials for stream bank stabilization as referenced in the attached certification.

We look forward to continuing the close cooperation and coordination between our two agencies. Please do not hesitate to contact myself (444-0240 JKenning@mt.gov) or Keenan Storrar (444-2734 Keenan.Storrar@mt.gov) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Jon Kenning-Chief
Water Protection Bureau

Cc: Toney Ott - U.S. EPA, 8WD-CWS w/ Attachments

Water Quality Certification in Accordance With Section 401 of the Clean Water Act for the 2020 Nationwide Permits in Montana

40 CFR § 121.7(d)(2)(i) Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) does not have project specific information that is required in the 'JOINT APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED WORK IN MONTANA'S STREAMS, WETLANDS, FLOODPLAINS, AND OTHER WATER BODIES'. Without this information, DEQ cannot identify specific waterways impacted by the project including wetlands and tributary streams or confirm the status of waterways impacted by the project.

A. Certification with General Conditions

DEQ is granting Section 401 Water Quality Certification (certification) with the General Conditions listed in Section E for Nationwide Permits 1-11, 14-20, 22-28, 30-36, 38, 41, 46-49.¹

B. Special Conditions for Specific Nationwide Permits

1) DEQ is granting certification of Nationwide Permit #12 [Oil or Natural Gas Pipeline Activities], Nationwide Permit C (#pending) [Electric Utility Line and Telecommunications Activities], and Nationwide Permit D (#pending) [Utility Line Activities for Water and Other Substances] for projects that do not a) disturb the bed and banks of waterbodies or b) cause a violation of short-term water quality standards for total suspended sediment and turbidity resulting from stream-related construction activities because a static or vibratory plow is used and/or Horizontal Directional Drilling technology is implemented. DEQ denies certification for all other projects that qualify under this Nationwide Permit.¹

2) DEQ is granting certification of Nationwide Permit #13 [Bank Stabilization], Nationwide Permit #21 [Surface Coal Mining Activities], Nationwide Permit #29 [Residential Developments], Nationwide Permit #37 [Emergency Watershed Protection and Rehabilitation], Nationwide Permit #39 [Commercial and Institutional Developments], Nationwide Permit #40 [Agricultural Activities], Nationwide Permit #42 [Recreational Facilities], Nationwide Permit #43 [Stormwater Management Facilities], Nationwide Permit #44 [Mining Activities], Nationwide Permit #45 [Repair of Uplands Damaged by Discrete Events], and Nationwide Permit #50 [Underground Coal Mining Activities] for all projects equal to or less than 300 linear feet.¹

C. Waiver

Nationwide Permit #54 [Living Shorelines], Nationwide Permit A (#pending) [Seaweed Mariculture Activities], Nationwide Permit B (#pending) [Finfish Mariculture Activities] are waived as these Nationwide Permits only apply to coastal shorelines and the Great Lakes.

D. Denial

Nationwide Permit #51 [Land Based Renewable Energy Generation Facilities], Nationwide Permit #52 [Water Based Energy Renewable Energy Generation Facilities], Nationwide #53 [Removal of Low Head Dams], Nationwide Permit E (#pending) [Water Reclamation and Reuse Facilities] are denied for the five year cycle.¹

¹ MCA 75-5 et seq.; MCA 75-7 et seq.; MCA 87-5 et. seq.; ARM 17.30 et. seq.

E. General Conditions for Nationwide Permits

The following general conditions apply to all certified Nationwide Permits as provided in A and B above:

- 1) DEQ Water Protection Bureau – Discharge Permitting Program must be notified by the permittee for all activities requiring USACE pre-construction notification (PCN)**. Notification shall be at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the activity and include (a) the permittee name and contact information, (b) the project name, (c) the Nationwide Permit(s) used for the project, (d) the Township, Range and Section, (e) the project or regulated activity location in decimal latitude and longitude to the millionth degree (six significant figures to the right of the decimal point) (f) the volume of the discharge, (g) the biological, chemical, physical, and radiological characteristics of the discharge, (h) a description of the existing environment at the site of the discharge, (i) the size of the area affected, (j) the location or locations at which the discharge may enter state waters. Notification of must be submitted by mail to DEQ or electronically through DEQ’s Fees, Applications, and Compliance Tracking System (FACTS) website at: <http://deq.mt.gov/Public/FACTS>^{2,3} ****For all projects where a Federal Agency is an applicant, that agency must provide notification and submit a Joint Application to DEQ, regardless of USACE pre-construction notification requirements.**³
- 2) This certification does not authorize the placement or construction of septic/leach systems or other sewage treatment facilities in wetlands.³
- 3) This certification does not authorize construction of dams, except for aquatic restoration projects and temporary dams associated with construction activity.³
- 4) This certification requires that materials used in stream bank or shore stabilization projects adhere to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality’s December 5, 2000 guidelines for materials for stream bank stabilization. Tires may not be used to stabilize any banks in state waters.³
- 5) This certification requires that all equipment be inspected for oil, gas, diesel, anti-freeze, hydraulic fluid and other petroleum leaks. Equipment cannot continue operating in or near the water if a leak is discovered. All such leaks will be properly repaired prior to equipment being allowed on the project site. Leaks that occur after the equipment is moved to the project site will be fixed that same day or the next day or be removed from the project area. If equipment is to be operated in or near water, a spill containment kit shall be available at the project site and DEQ shall be notified of spills.³
- 6) This certification requires that all permittees shall, to the maximum extent practicable, incorporate and construct design features that eliminate bridge deck run-off containing sediment, salt, or other pollutants from discharging directly into state water. To the extent practicable, bridge deck run-off, should be directed to a detention basin of unspecified size prior to continuing into state waters.³
- 7) This certification requires that riprap projects, to the extent practicable, avoid the use of geotextile fabric as riprap bedding material. To the extent practicable, riprap voids shall incorporate approximately 30-50% fines/soil and dormant plant material and/or root-stock.³

² During FACTS development phase, notifications shall be sent to: DEQWPBPublicComments@mt.gov

³ MCA 75-5 et seq.; MCA 75-7 et seq.; MCA 87-5 et. seq.; ARM 17.30 et. seq.

8) The use of more than one NWP for a single and complete project is prohibited, except when the acreage loss of waters of the United States authorized by the NWPs does not exceed the acreage limit of the NWP with the highest specified acreage limit. For example, if a road crossing over a river is constructed under NWP 14, with associated bank stabilization authorized by NWP 13, the maximum acreage loss of waters of the United States for the total project cannot exceed 1/2-acre.⁴

9) Restored riparian areas shall be stable and should consist of native species.⁴

F. Reopener Clause

DEQ reserves the right to add or alter terms and conditions as appropriate to carry out its responsibilities with respect to water quality throughout the five year Nationwide Permit Cycle.⁴

⁴ MCA 75-5 et seq.; MCA 75-7 et seq.; MCA 87-5 et. seq.; ARM 17.30 et. seq.

Policy on Streambank Stabilization

This policy outlines the guidelines for approved materials to be used for streambank stabilization in Montana. This policy and a draft Environment Assessment were provided to the public for comment via public notice MT-00-10 issued September 18, 2000. Comments were accepted until October 17, 2000. The draft Environmental Assessment is adopted as the final Environmental Assessment with the Responses to Comments incorporated.

Signed into policy 12/05/00 by Bonnie Lovelace, Chief, Water Protection Bureau and 12/06/00 by Jan Sensibaugh, Administrator, Permitting & Compliance Division.

GUIDELINES FOR MATERIALS FOR STREAMBANK STABILIZATION

The following guidelines represent the efforts of a work group composed of Conservation District representatives, natural resource consultants, environmental interests, and state and federal regulatory agencies. They are suggested by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality and not necessarily endorsed by all the work group members. These guidelines are only for use in areas where the use of high-density, angular rock is not practicable. (The term "practicable" means available and capable of being done after taking into consideration cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of overall project purposes [40 CFR 230.3(q)]). Sandstone or broken concrete may be acceptable alternatives to high-density, angular rock in certain situations, although local regulation may prohibit their use. The use of any river training device/structure may directly or cumulatively alter the ecology of Montana rivers and streams. Cumulative impact considerations may preclude the use of any river training device.

Bank stabilization projects are sometimes authorized under the following jurisdictions: Local Conservation District - Natural Streambed & Land Conservation Act (310); Montana Department of Fish Wildlife and Parks - Stream Protection Act (SPA 124); County Floodplain Administrator - Floodplain Permit; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Section 404/10 Permit; Montana Department of Environmental Quality - 75-5-318, MCA Authorization; Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation - Navigable Rivers Land Use License/Easement.

The following optional design concepts should be considered in conjunction with the guidelines to minimize environmental/aesthetic concerns:

- Utilize rock only in the lower* portion or toe of the riprap with woody structures/features, biodegradable fabric, etc. in the upper* portions.
* The elevation at which the mean annual flow occurs is the division between "upper" and "lower."
- Incorporate soil in the upper portions of the project with appropriate woody (usually willow) plantings as near average water elevations as possible and herbaceous plantings elsewhere.
- Provide a temporary or permanent buffer strip (streamside area where protection promotes growth and sustenance of woody vegetation) along the project length to provide for vegetation stability where grazing or recreational use may impact plant growth.
- Preferably, plantings should be on slopes of 3:1 or flatter and irrigated, if possible.

(Note: Numerous documents with more detailed information are available. Contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service or the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation for their "Stream Project Manual.")

COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION

Project: (Please attach copy of the completed "Joint Application for Proposed Work in Montana's Streams, Wetlands, Floodplains, and Other Water Bodies.")

Upon completion of project activity, sign this certificate and return it to the following address:

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Permitting & Compliance Division/Water Protection Bureau
Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Please answer the following questions:

1. What is the source of the concrete rubble?
2. What is the type of concrete rubble (curb/gutter, foundation, etc.)?
3. What was the cost of the rubble?
(The recipient of the rubble cannot be compensated for accepting the rubble without a landfill license.)

I hereby certify that the project work performed is in compliance with all applicable permits and in compliance with the "Guidelines for Materials for Streambank Stabilization."

Signature of Project Owner

Date

I hereby certify that I provided the concrete rubble used in the project and that I did not compensate the owner for accepting the rubble.

Signature of Concrete Rubble Provider

Date