



NEWS RELEASE

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Corps reissues general permit for the state of Rhode Island for minimal impact activities in U.S. waters

CONCORD, Mass. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District is reissuing the statewide Rhode Island General Permit for minimal-impact activities in U.S. waters within the state of Rhode Island. The prior Rhode Island Programmatic General Permit (PGP) expired on Feb. 13, 2012. The reissued General Permit became effective on Feb. 22, 2012.

The reissued Rhode Island GP continues the expedited review process for activities in Corps jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, and Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act. A public notice was issued in accordance with 33 CFR 325.10 to ensure potential applicants for permits are informed of the requirements of 33 CFR 320-330 and of the steps required to obtain permits for activities in waters of the United States or ocean waters.

General Permits are encouraged under the President's plan to streamline state and Federal regulatory programs. The Corps has already had success with streamlining these programs through the use of general permits throughout New England.

This GP is designed to authorize activities covered under the Nationwide Permit program and the prior PGP. Continued use of the general permit process in place of the Nationwide Permits (NWP) will provide important benefits to the public, including simplifying the process, state and federal concurrent review, and providing necessary environmental protection. Projects with minimal individual and cumulative effects on the aquatic environment will be approved administratively under this General Permit. Projects that do not meet the terms and conditions of this GP will be subjected to an Individual Permit review. The Individual Permit review procedures are not altered by the General Permit.

Federal exemptions, which are not necessarily the same as the state of Rhode Island's exemptions, also are not altered by the GP. Project proponents also must obtain any appropriate local and state approvals when required in order for this GP to be valid. All GP authorizations will be subject to the applicability requirements, procedures, and conditions contained in the GP document.

The new GP supercedes the previous PGP, but does not affect activities authorized under the previous PGP that have commenced prior to this re-issuance. Activities which have commenced (i.e. are under construction or are under contract to commence) prior to the expiration date of the previous PGP in reliance upon the terms and conditions of the category under which it was authorized, shall remain authorized provided the

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Corps reissues Rhode Island General Permit/2-2-2-2-2

activity is completed by Feb. 13, 2013 or in accordance with specific expiration requirements contained in the individual Corps PGP authorization letter for Category 2 projects.

The Rhode Island General Permit can be viewed on the Corps website at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>. Select "Regulatory," then "General Information," then "General Permits," and then "Rhode Island" or go directly to the link at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Regulatory/SGP/ri.htm>.

Additional information is available from Permit Project Manager Michael Elliott at 978-318-8131 or toll free 800-343-4789 or 800-362-4367 (if calling from within Massachusetts) or by email to michael.j.elliott@usace.army.mil.

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