Water Quality Certification No. 3883

GENERAL CERTIFICATION FOR PROJECTS ELIGIBLE FOR U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS NATIONWIDE PERMIT NUMBERS: 3 (MAINTENANCE), 4 (FISH AND WILDLIFE HARVESTING, ENHANCEMENT, AND ATTRACTION DEVICES AND ACTIVITIES), 5 (SCIENTIFIC MEASUREMENT DEVICES—25 CUBIC YARDS FOR WEIRS AND FLUMES), 6 (SURVEY ACTIVITIES—25 CUBIC YARDS FOR TEMPORARY PADS), 7 (OUTFALL STRUCTURES AND ASSOCIATED INTAKE STRUCTURES), 19 (MINOR DREDGING), 20 (OIL SPILL CLEANUP), 22 (REMOVAL OF VESSELS), 25 (STRUCTURAL DISCHARGE), 30(MOIST SOIL MANAGEMENT FOR WILDLIFE), 32 (COMPLETED ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS), 36 (BOAT RAMPS [IN NONWETLAND SITES]), AND REGIONAL PERMIT 197800056 (PIERS, DOCKS AND BOATHOUSES), AND REGIONAL PERMIT 197800125 (BOAT RAMPS) AND RIPARIAN AREA PROTECTION RULES (BUFFER RULES)

Water Quality Certification Number 3883 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 Division of Water Quality (DWQ) Regulations in 15 NCAC 02H .0500 and 15 NCAC 02B .0200 for the discharge of fill material to waters and wetland areas which are waters of the United States as described in 33 CFR 330 Appendix A (B) (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 19, 20, 22, 25, 30, 32, and 36) and Regional Permits 197800056 and 19780125 and for the Riparian Area Protection Rules (Buffer Rules) in 15A NCAC 02B .0200.

The State of North Carolina certifies that the specified category of activity will not violate 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.

Activities meeting any one (1) of the following thresholds or circumstances require *written approval* for a 401 Water Quality Certification from the Division of Water Quality (the "Division"):

a. Impacts equal to or greater than 40 linear feet of additional permanent stream impact (including stream relocations) at an existing stream impact location; or
b. Temporary or permanent impacts equal to or greater than one-tenth (1/10) of an acre of wetlands; or
c. Any impact associated with a Notice of Violation or an enforcement action for violation(s) of DWQ Wetland Rules (15A NCAC 02H .0500), Isolated Wetland Rules (15A NCAC 02H .1300), DWQ Surface Water or Wetland Standards, or Riparian Buffer Rules (15A NCAC 02B .0200); or
d. Any impacts to streams and/or buffers in the Neuse, Tar-Pamlico, or Catawba River Basins or in the Randleman, Jordan or Goose Creek Watersheds (or any other basin or watershed with Riparian Area Protection Rules [Buffer Rules] in effect at the time of application) *unless* the activities are listed as "EXEMPT" from these rules or a Buffer Authorization Certificate is issued through N.C. Division of Coastal Management (DCM) delegation for "ALLOWABLE" activities.

In accordance with North Carolina General Statute 143-215.3D(e), written approval for a 401 Water Quality General Certification must include the appropriate fee. If a project also requires a CAMA Permit, then one payment to both agencies shall be submitted and will be the higher of the two fees.

Activities included in this General Certification that do not meet one of the thresholds listed above do not require written approval from the Division as long as they comply with the Conditions of Certification listed below. If any of these Conditions cannot be met, then written approval from the Division is required.

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Conditions of Certification:

1. No Impacts Beyond those Authorized in the Written Approval or Beyond the Threshold of Use of this Certification

   No waste, spoil, solids, or fill of any kind shall occur in wetlands, waters, or riparian areas beyond the footprint of the impacts depicted in the Pre-Construction Notification, as authorized in the written approval from the Division or beyond the thresholds established for use of this Certification without written authorization, including incidental impacts. All construction activities, including the design, installation, operation, and maintenance of sediment and erosion control Best Management Practices shall be performed so that no violations of state water quality standards, statutes, or rules occur. Approved plans and specifications for this project are incorporated by reference and are enforceable parts of this permit.

2. Standard Erosion and Sediment Control Practices

   Erosion and sediment control practices must be in full compliance with all specifications governing the proper design, installation and operation and maintenance of such Best Management Practices and if applicable, comply with the specific conditions and requirements of the NPDES Construction Stormwater Permit issued to the site:

   a. Design, installation, operation, and maintenance of the sediment and erosion control measures must be such that they equal or exceed the requirements specified in the most recent version of the *North Carolina Sediment and Erosion Control Manual*. The devices shall be maintained on all construction sites, borrow sites, and waste pile (spoil) projects, including contractor-owned or leased borrow pits associated with the project.

   b. For borrow pit sites, the erosion and sediment control measures must be designed, installed, operated, and maintained in accordance with the most recent version of the *North Carolina Surface Mining Manual*.

   c. Reclamation measures and implementation must comply with the reclamation in accordance with the requirements of the Sedimentation Pollution Control Act and the Mining Act of 1971.

   d. Sufficient materials required for stabilization and/or repair of erosion control measures and stormwater routing and treatment shall be on site at all times.

   e. If the project occurs in waters or watersheds classified as Primary Nursery Areas (PNAs), SA, WS-I, WS-II, High Quality (HQW), or Outstanding Resource (ORW) waters, then the sedimentation and erosion control designs must comply with the requirements set forth in 15A NCAC 04B .0124, *Design Standards in Sensitive Watersheds*.

3. No Sediment and Erosion Control Measures in Wetlands or Waters

   Sediment and erosion control measures shall not be placed in wetlands or waters. Exceptions to this condition require application submittal to and written approval by the Division. If placement of sediment and erosion control devices in wetlands and waters is unavoidable, then design and placement of temporary erosion control measures shall not be conducted in a manner that may result in dis-equilibrium of wetlands, stream beds, or banks, adjacent to or upstream and downstream of the above structures. All sediment and erosion control devices shall be removed and the natural grade restored within two (2) months of the date that the Division of Land Resources (DLR) or locally delegated program has released the specific area within the project.

4. Construction Stormwater Permit NCG010000

An NPDES Construction Stormwater Permit is required for construction projects that disturb one (1) or more acres of land. This Permit allows stormwater to be discharged during land disturbing construction activities as stipulated in the conditions of the permit. If your project is covered by this permit, full compliance with permit conditions including the erosion & sedimentation control plan, inspections and maintenance, self-monitoring, record keeping and reporting requirements is required. A copy of the general permit (NCG010000), inspection log sheets, and other information may be found at http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wq/ws/su/npdessw#tab-w .

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) shall be required to be in full compliance with the conditions related to construction activities within the most recent version of their individual NPDES (NCS000250) stormwater permit.

5. Work in the Dry

All work in or adjacent to stream waters shall be conducted so that the flowing stream does not come in contact with the disturbed area. Approved best management practices from the most current version of the NC Sediment and Erosion Control Manual, or the NC DOT Construction and Maintenance Activities Manual, such as sandbags, rock berms, cofferdams, and other diversion structures shall be used to minimize excavation in flowing water. Exceptions to this condition require application submittal to and written approval by the Division.

6. Construction Moratoriums and Coordination

If activities must occur during periods of high biological activity (i.e. sea turtle nesting, fish spawning, or bird nesting), then biological monitoring may be required at the request of other state or federal agencies and coordinated with these activities.

All moratoriums on construction activities established by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission (WRC), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), NC Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF), or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to lessen impacts on trout, anadromous fish, larval/post-larval fishes and crustaceans, or other aquatic species of concern shall be implemented. Exceptions to this condition require written approval by the resource agency responsible for the given moratorium.

Work within the twenty-five (25) designated trout counties or identified state or federal endangered or threatened species habitat shall be coordinated with the appropriate WRC, USFWS, NMFS, and/or DMF personnel.

7. Riparian Area Protection Rules (Buffer Rules)

Activities located in the protected riparian areas (whether jurisdictional wetlands or not), within the Neuse, Tar-Pamlico, or Catawba River Basins or in the Randleman, Jordan, or Goose Creek Watersheds (or any other basin or watershed with buffer rules) shall be limited to "uses" identified within and constructed in accordance with 15A NCAC 02B .0233, .0259, .0243, .0250, .0267 and .0605, and shall be located, designed, constructed, and maintained to have minimal disturbance to protect water quality to the maximum extent practicable through the use of best management practices. All buffer rule requirements, including diffuse flow requirements, must be met.

8. Placement of Culverts and Other Structures in Waters and Wetlands

   Culverts required for this project shall be designed and installed in such a manner that the original stream profiles are not altered and allow for aquatic life movement during low flows. Existing stream dimensions (including the cross section dimensions, pattern, and longitudinal profile) must be maintained above and below locations of each culvert.

   Placement of culverts and other structures in waters and streams must be below the elevation of the streambed by one foot for all culverts with a diameter greater than 48 inches, and 20 percent of the culvert diameter for culverts having a diameter less than or equal to 48 inches, to allow low flow passage of water and aquatic life.

   When topographic constraints indicate culvert slopes of greater than 5%, culvert burial is not required, provided that all alternative options for flattening the slope have been investigated and aquatic life movement/ connectivity has been provided when possible (rock ladders, crossvanes, etc). Notification to the Division including supporting documentation to include a location map of the culvert, culvert profile drawings, and slope calculations shall be provided to the Division 60 days prior to the installation of the culvert.

   When bedrock is present in culvert locations, culvert burial is not required provided that there is sufficient documentation of the presence of bedrock. Notification to the Division including supporting documentation such as, but not limited to, a location map of the culvert, geotechnical reports, photographs, etc shall be provided to the Division a minimum of 60 days prior to the installation of the culvert. If bedrock is discovered during construction, then the Division shall be notified by phone or email within 24 hours of discovery.

   If other site-specific topographic constraints preclude the ability to bury the culverts as described above and/or it can be demonstrated that burying the culvert would result in destabilization of the channel, then exceptions to this condition require application submittal to, and written approval by, the Division of Water Quality, regardless of the total impacts to streams or wetlands from the project.

   Installation of culverts in wetlands must ensure continuity of water movement and be designed to adequately accommodate high water or flood conditions. Additionally, when roadways, causeways, or other fill projects are constructed across FEMA-designated floodways or wetlands, openings such as culverts or bridges must 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 must be used where practicable instead of riprap or other bank hardening methods.

9. If concrete is used during the construction, then all necessary measures shall be taken to prevent direct contact between uncured or curing concrete and waters of the state. Water that inadvertently contacts uncured concrete shall not be discharged to waters of the state due to the potential for elevated pH and possible aquatic life/ fish kills.

10. Applications for riprap groins proposed in accordance with 15A NCAC 07H .1401 (NC Division of Coastal Management General Permit for construction of Wooden and Riprap Groins in Estuarine and Public Trust Waters) must meet all the specific conditions for design and construction specified in 15A NCAC 07H .1405.

11. Bridge deck drains shall not discharge directly into the stream. Stormwater shall be directed across the bridge and pre-treated through site-appropriate means (grassed swales, pre-formed scour holes, vegetated buffers, etc.) before entering the stream. Please refer to the most current version of *Stormwater Best Management Practices.* Exceptions to this condition require written approval by the Division.

12. Compensatory Mitigation

    In accordance with 15A NCAC 02H .0506 (h), compensatory mitigation may be required for losses of equal to or greater than 150 linear feet of streams (intermittent and perennial) and/or equal to or greater than one (1) acre of wetlands. For linear public transportation projects, impacts equal to or exceeding 150 linear feet per stream shall require mitigation.

    Buffer mitigation may be required for any project with Buffer Rules in effect at the time of application for activities classified as "Allowable with Mitigation" or "Prohibited" within the Table of Uses.

    A determination of buffer, wetland, and stream mitigation requirements shall be made for any General Water Quality Certification for this Nationwide and/or Regional General Permit. Design and monitoring protocols shall follow the US Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District *Stream Mitigation Guidelines* (April 2003) or its subsequent updates. Compensatory mitigation plans shall be submitted to the Division for written approval as required in those protocols. The mitigation plan must be implemented and/or constructed before any impacts occur on site. Alternatively, the Division will accept payment into an in-lieu fee program or a mitigation bank. In these cases, proof of payment shall be provided to the Division before any impacts occur on site.

13. All temporary fill and culverts shall be removed and the impacted area returned to natural conditions within 60 days of the determination that the temporary impact is no longer necessary. The impacted areas shall be restored to original grade, including each stream's original cross sectional dimensions, plan form pattern, and longitudinal bed and bed profile, and the various sites shall be stabilized with natural woody vegetation (except for the approved maintenance areas) and restored to prevent erosion.

14. All temporary pipes/ culverts/ riprap pads etc, shall be installed in all streams as outlined in the most recent edition of the *North Carolina Sediment and Erosion Control Planning and Design Manual* or the *North Carolina Surface Mining Manual* so as not to restrict stream flow or cause dis-equilibrium during use of this General Certification.

15. Any riprap required for proper culvert placement, stream stabilization, or restoration of temporarily disturbed areas shall be restricted to the area directly impacted by the approved construction activity. All rip-rap shall buried and/or "keyed in" such that the original stream elevation and streambank contours are restored and maintained. Placement of rip-rap or other approved materials shall not result in de-stabilization of the stream bed or banks upstream or downstream of the area.

16. Any rip-rap used for stream stabilization shall be of a size and density so as not to be able to be carried off by wave, current action, or stream flows and consist of clean rock or masonry material free of debris or toxic pollutants. Rip-rap shall not be installed in the streambed except in specific areas required for velocity control and to ensure structural integrity of bank stabilization measures.

17. A one-time application of fertilizer to re-establish vegetation is allowed in disturbed areas including riparian buffers, but is restricted to no closer than 10 feet from top of bank of streams. Any fertilizer application must comply with all other Federal, State and Local regulations.

18. If an environmental document is required under the National or State Environmental Policy Act (NEPA or SEPA), then this General Certification is not valid until a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) or Record of Decision (ROD) is issued by the State Clearinghouse.

19. In the twenty (20) coastal counties, the appropriate DWQ Regional Office must be contacted to determine if Coastal Stormwater Regulations will be required.

20. This General Certification does not relieve the applicant of the responsibility to obtain all other required Federal, State, or Local approvals.

21. The applicant/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. If the Division determines that such standards or laws are not being met, including failure to sustain a designated or achieved use, or that State or Federal law is being violated, or that further conditions are necessary to assure compliance, then the Division may reevaluate and modify this General Water Quality Certification.

22. When written authorization is required for use of this certification, upon completion of all permitted impacts included within the approval and any subsequent modifications, the applicant shall be required to return the certificate of completion attached to the approval. One copy of the certificate shall be sent to the DWQ Central Office in Raleigh at 1650 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC, 27699-1650.

23. Additional site-specific conditions, including monitoring and/or modeling requirements, may be added to the written approval letter for projects proposed under this Water Quality Certification in order to ensure compliance with all applicable water quality and effluent standards.

24. This certification grants permission to the director, an authorized representative of the Director, or DENR staff, upon the presentation of proper credentials, to enter the property during normal business hours.

This General Certification shall expire on the same day as the expiration date of the corresponding Nationwide and/or Regional General 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 Certification.

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

The Director of the North Carolina Division of Water Quality may require submission of a formal application for Individual Certification for any project in this category of activity if it is determined that the project is likely to have a significant adverse effect upon water quality, including state or federally listed endangered or threatened aquatic species, or degrade the waters so that existing uses of the wetland or downstream waters are precluded.

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Public hearings may be held for specific applications or group of applications prior to a Certification decision if deemed in the public's best interest by the Director of the North Carolina Division of Water Quality.

Effective date: March 19, 2012

DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY

By

Charles Wakild, P.E.

Director

History Note: Water Quality Certification (WQC) Number 3883 issued March 19, 2012 replaces WQC Number 3687 issued November 1, 2007; WQC Number 3624 issued March 19, 2007; WQC Number 3494 issued December 31, 2004; and WQC Number 3376 issued March 18, 2002. This General Certification is rescinded when the Corps of Engineers reauthorizes any of the corresponding Nationwide and/or Regional General Permits or when deemed appropriate by the Director of the Division of Water Quality.