

**Department of Environment and Local Government
Source and Surface Water Management Branch**

Projects Involving Dredging and In-Channel Excavation

INTRODUCTION

The *Clean Water Act* requires, in part, that a person planning an alteration, as defined by the Act, to a watercourse or wetland and/ or within 30 metres of these features shall first obtain a permit issued by the Minister. The procedure for obtaining such a permit is set out in the *Watercourse and Wetland Alteration Regulation*, under the *Clean Water Act*.

The Department of Environment and Local Government (DELG) has adopted an operational practice to serve as supplementary information to the Watercourse and Wetland Alteration (WAWA) Technical Guidelines. The operational practice was developed to ensure consistent and transparent decision making while reviewing projects involving dredging and in-channel excavation.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The operational practice covers projects involving in-channel cleaning (in-channel excavation) and dredging. These activities are defined below.

Channel cleaning (in-channel excavation): The removal of material foreign to the natural composition of the stream bed and/ or fluvial deposits to improve hydraulic conditions for conveyance of flow and the passage of ice.

Dredging: The excavation of material from the bed of a watercourse by mechanical means.

A WAWA permit will only be granted if the project is being proposed for any of the following rationales:

- a) The removal of material foreign to the natural composition of the stream bed and/ or gravel or fluvial deposit resulting from a storm event or a wash out to improve hydraulic conditions for conveyance of flow and the passage of ice. Natural areas of deposition created over time will not be considered without a complete assessment of the channel (at least 10 times the width of the channel upstream and downstream of the proposed work).
- b) To improve industrial and public navigation: To deepen channels, lakes, canals, harbors, or inlets for use by boats. This applies to both existing and proposed harbors, marinas, ferry crossings, and other public launches.
- c) Foundation preparation: To remove unsuitable material at proposed locations for supporting structures such as piers, wharfs, etc.
- d) Environmental: To excavate unwanted or polluted materials such as mine tailings or contaminated sediments.

- e) Water reservoir: To increase the size of an existing reservoir or to create a new water reservoir for domestic or firefighting purposes or to remove accumulated sediment in existing reservoirs.
- f) Mining: To mine minerals such as manganese or gold from the bed of a watercourse.

Note: In-channel excavation/ dredging solely for recreational reasons that does not serve a purpose to the necessary public function will not be approved. Examples not for necessary public function include, but are not limited to, deepening a private beach and in-water excavating for a private boat launch.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

All WAWA permit applications must be submitted using the online application program (<https://www.elgegl.gnb.ca/WAWAG/en/Home/Site>). During the application process, you will be able to upload all supporting documents for your project. You will need the following information when submitting your proposal:

-A project description detailing your project, which must provide the measurements of your alteration, the composition of the bed material to be removed, the type of machinery to be used, how/ where the removed materials are to be disposed of, sediment and water control plans, and the cause of the infilling (if known).

-A plan, profile, and cross-section drawing to scale showing the existing and the proposed channel, extending a distance of 10 channel widths upstream and downstream of the limits of the proposed excavation.

-If you are not listed as the property owner as displayed through Service New Brunswick, you must include written consent from the landowner. Furthermore, if you are applying as a contact on behalf of the landowner, you must include written consent from the landowner to do so.

-Fees must be paid. Payment can be made online during the time of the application. However, if you choose to pay at one of DELG's office, you will have to pay with cash, cheque, or money order. Credit cards and debit cards are only accepted online.

NOTE: If your application is received by DELG with any of the above information missing, the application will not be formally accepted until all required information is provided. You will be advised that your application is on hold and will not be reviewed any further until all the missing information has been received.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Please note that this document is not a substitute for the *Clean Water Act* or the *Watercourse and Wetland Alteration Regulation*, NB Reg 90-80. In addition, other agencies such as other provincial departments, the federal government, and local governments, may have requirements not addressed or included in this operational practice. This document may be reviewed and updated periodically as deemed appropriate by DELG.

INQUIRIES

For further information regarding the Watercourse and Wetland Alteration Program, please contact the Source and Surface Water Management Branch of the Department of Environment and Local Government at wawa@gnb.ca or 506-457-4850.