



## **Northampton County Conservation District**

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### **Northampton County Conservation District Expedited Technical Review Policy**

At the request of, and to improve service to, the District's customers, the Northampton County Conservation District (NCCD) has established a process for expedited technical review of Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control (E&S) and Post Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM) plans. The following policies and procedures shall apply to the District's technical review only during the time period of January 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> of any given year; NPDES permit processing would occur based on PADEP Standard Operating Procedures.

1. A limit of four applications (or equivalent to the number of active NCCD E&S staff members) in-process at one time will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Acceptance into the procedure will be subject to staff availability and completeness of the application (re: #6). In order not to adversely impact the normal review rotation, expedited reviews will be conducted outside of normal working hours.
2. The expedited review fee will be 2 times the regular service fee, in addition to the regular/base service fee. Applicant must submit a separate check for the expedited fee (2 times the regular fee) in addition to the check for the regular/base fee.
3. Any agencies exempt from paying a review fee, (i.e. Commonwealth departments, County, etc.) will not be eligible for an expedited review. Agencies with a regular/base fee discount, i.e. municipalities, school districts, and authorities, will be charged the full expedited review fee, in addition to the discounted regular/base fee.
4. Entrance into the procedure will be limited to plans which disturb  $\leq 50$  acres, (no exceptions). Projects that propose alternative BMPs will not be eligible for an expedited review.
5. Any given applicant may submit only one application per calendar month for expedited review. If a Chapter 102 penalty was assessed by NCCD on an applicant in the last 5 years, they will not be eligible to apply for an expedited review. For purposes of this procedure, an applicant is defined as a project owner/developer/permittee, not an engineering or consulting firm. Prior to submission, the owner/developer/permittee and the plan designer must schedule a formal pre-application meeting with the District Manager; interest in expedited review must be stated at the time of scheduling. If a general or earthmoving contractor has already been engaged, he/she shall also attend the meeting. Two copies of the complete NPDES permit application, if applicable, and the proposed finalized E&S and PCSM plans must be presented and discussed at the meeting to be eligible for an expedited review. The plan reviewers will be assigned at this meeting. The application must be submitted within 6 weeks of the date of the meeting or another meeting is required to be held prior to the submission.

6. Projects requiring a NPDES Permit must submit an administratively complete NPDES permit application. If the application is found to be incomplete (formal incompleteness letter is issued per DEP SOP), the application will no longer be eligible for the expedited review.

7. The following must be submitted with the initial submission to be eligible for an expedited review:

- a. Applicant must submit a letter, signed by the applicant, requesting an expedited review.
- b. This request must include a statement that the plan is complete and represents a professional standard of work.
- c. The applicant shall include a letter from the appropriate municipality/municipal engineer stating at what stage of the municipal review process the project stands.
- d. A complete NCCD Review Application must be provided with all information filled out with the statement, "Expedited Review Requested", written at the top of the form.
- e. The PADEP April 2012 "Erosion And Sediment Pollution Control Program Manual" technical review checklist must be completed and included, providing the corresponding specific drawing and narrative page numbers as referenced.
- f. Applicant must submit a separate check for the expedited fee (2 times the regular fee) in addition to the check for the regular/base fee.

8. The expedited review submission will undergo an initial check for acceptance within 5 working days of receipt or, if a NPDES permit is required, within 5 working days from the date that the NPDES Permit Application was found complete. The applicant and plan designer will be notified via fax/email and standard mail of acceptance or denial into the expedited review system.

9. If complete and accepted:

- a. A non-NPDES application or General NPDES permit application for a project disturbing 0- to 25 acres will undergo technical review within 10 business days of acceptance. A plan disturbing 25 to 50 acres or greater will be reviewed within 15 business days of acceptance.
- b. An Individual NPDES permit application for a project disturbing 0 to 25 acres will undergo technical review within 15 business days of acceptance. A plan disturbing 25 to 50 acres or greater will be reviewed within 20 business days of acceptance.

10. To qualify for a follow-up review, a response letter detailing the revisions made, with reference to plan and page number, and plan sets with the changes highlighted must be provided. Expedited review letters will be faxed/mailed to the applicant and plan designer. Expedited review letters will also be sent via standard mail. The District will commit to reviewing the revisions within the same time frame established under item 9 above.

11. If, after the initial review, a meeting to review the technical plan deficiencies with the reviewer is requested, the District will hold said meeting within 5 working days of request, based on staff availability. The meeting will be held outside of normal Conservation District office hours. Questions may be sent via email to be answered outside of normal Conservation District hours.

12. The expedited review process may be initiated after any technical review is completed with the submission of the items listed in item 7 above. However, prior to resubmission, a formal plan review meeting must be held with the District per item #5 of the policy to review the current technical deficiency letter with the applicant and designer. All other conditions of the policy would still apply to be eligible for acceptance.

13. Projects on which an expedited review is requested should be far enough along that technical review(s) is one of the final steps in the approval process – repeated submissions of the same project because of design changes are unacceptable. Once a plan has been deemed adequate, it will not be accepted a second time for expedited review (i.e. permit amendments, etc.).

14. The expedited fee will cover an initial technical review plus one follow-up review, if needed. There will be no additional fee for this subsequent review. If an additional formal follow-up review is needed, it will be outside of the expedited review system during normal business hours and may require an additional fee based on the current fee schedule and be subject to the PA DEP Elevated review process if a NPDES permit is required.

Adopted by the Northampton County Conservation District Board on August 13, 2013.

Adopted by Northampton County Council on September 19, 2013 (Resolution 83-2013). Minor revision 5/12/16 (Clarification of #2 and #6; renumbering). Policy suspended by Board 9/13/16 until 2017 due to limited staff, 4/11/17 revision for reinstatement with limited staff.

Policy revised for PCSM Delegation: adopted by the Northampton County Conservation District Board on 5/8/18; adopted by Northampton County Council on 6/7/18 (Resolution 73-2018); Policy revised by NCCD Board on 3/12/19; adopted by Northampton County Council on 5/2/19 (Resolution 44-2019)