

Environmental Protection Agency

§ 230.5

which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;

(2) All interstate waters including interstate wetlands;

(3) All other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sandflats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds, the use, degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate or foreign commerce including any such waters:

(i) Which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes; or

(ii) From which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce; or

(iii) Which are used or could be used for industrial purposes by industries in interstate commerce;

(4) All impoundments of waters otherwise defined as waters of the United States under this definition;

(5) Tributaries of waters identified in paragraphs (s)(1) through (4) of this section;

(6) The territorial sea;

(7) Wetlands adjacent to waters (other than waters that are themselves wetlands) identified in paragraphs (s)(1) through (6) of this section; waste treatment systems, including treatment ponds or lagoons designed to meet the requirements of CWA (other than cooling ponds as defined in 40 CFR 423.11(m) which also meet the criteria of this definition) are not waters of the United States.

Waters of the United States do not include prior converted cropland. Notwithstanding the determination of an area's status as prior converted cropland by any other federal agency, for the purposes of the Clean Water Act, the final authority regarding Clean Water Act jurisdiction remains with EPA.

(t) The term *wetlands* means those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands

generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas.

[45 FR 85344, Dec. 24, 1980, as amended at 58 FR 45037, Aug. 25, 1993]

§ 230.4 Organization.

The Guidelines are divided into eight subparts. Subpart A presents those provisions of general applicability, such as purpose and definitions. Subpart B establishes the four conditions which must be satisfied in order to make a finding that a proposed discharge of dredged or fill material complies with the Guidelines. Section 230.11 of subpart B, sets forth factual determinations which are to be considered in determining whether or not a proposed discharge satisfies the subpart B conditions of compliance. Subpart C describes the physical and chemical components of a site and provides guidance as to how proposed discharges of dredged or fill material may affect these components. Subparts D through F detail the special characteristics of particular aquatic ecosystems in terms of their values, and the possible loss of these values due to discharges of dredged or fill material. Subpart G prescribes a number of physical, chemical, and biological evaluations and testing procedures to be used in reaching the required factual determinations. Subpart H details the means to prevent or minimize adverse effects. Subpart I concerns advanced identification of disposal areas.

§ 230.5 General procedures to be followed.

In evaluating whether a particular discharge site may be specified, the permitting authority should use these Guidelines in the following sequence:

(a) In order to obtain an overview of the principal regulatory provisions of the Guidelines, review the restrictions on discharge in § 230.10(a) through (d), the measures to minimize adverse impact of subpart H, and the required factual determinations of § 230.11.

(b) Determine if a General permit (§ 230.7) is applicable; if so, the applicant needs merely to comply with its terms, and no further action by the permitting authority is necessary. Special conditions for evaluation of proposed General permits are contained in

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§ 230.7. If the discharge is not covered by a General permit:

(c) Examine practicable alternatives to the proposed discharge, that is, not discharging into the waters of the U.S. or discharging into an alternative aquatic site with potentially less damaging consequences (§ 230.10(a)).

(d) Delineate the candidate disposal site consistent with the criteria and evaluations of § 230.11(f).

(e) Evaluate the various physical and chemical components which characterize the non-living environment of the candidate site, the substrate and the water including its dynamic characteristics (subpart C).

(f) Identify and evaluate any special or critical characteristics of the candidate disposal site, and surrounding areas which might be affected by use of such site, related to their living communities or human uses (subparts D, E, and F).

(g) Review Factual Determinations in § 230.11 to determine whether the information in the project file is sufficient to provide the documentation required by § 230.11 or to perform the pre-testing evaluation described in § 230.60, or other information is necessary.

(h) Evaluate the material to be discharged to determine the possibility of chemical contamination or physical incompatibility of the material to be discharged (§ 230.60).

(i) If there is a reasonable probability of chemical contamination, conduct the appropriate tests according to the section on Evaluation and Testing (§ 230.61).

(j) Identify appropriate and practicable changes to the project plan to minimize the environmental impact of the discharge, based upon the specialized methods of minimization of impacts in subpart H.

(k) Make and document Factual Determinations in § 230.11.

(l) Make and document Findings of Compliance (§ 230.12) by comparing Factual Determinations with the requirements for discharge of § 230.10.

This outline of the steps to follow in using the Guidelines is simplified for purposes of illustration. The actual process followed may be iterative, with the results of one step leading to a re-examination of previous steps. The per-

mitting authority must address all of the relevant provisions of the Guidelines in reaching a Finding of Compliance in an individual case.

§ 230.6 Adaptability.

(a) The manner in which these Guidelines are used depends on the physical, biological, and chemical nature of the proposed extraction site, the material to be discharged, and the candidate disposal site, including any other important components of the ecosystem being evaluated. Documentation to demonstrate knowledge about the extraction site, materials to be extracted, and the candidate disposal site is an essential component of guideline application. These Guidelines allow evaluation and documentation for a variety of activities, ranging from those with large, complex impacts on the aquatic environment to those for which the impact is likely to be innocuous. It is unlikely that the Guidelines will apply in their entirety to any one activity, no matter how complex. It is anticipated that substantial numbers of permit applications will be for minor, routine activities that have little, if any, potential for significant degradation of the aquatic environment. It generally is not intended or expected that extensive testing, evaluation or analysis will be needed to make findings of compliance in such routine cases. Where the conditions for General permits are met, and where numerous applications for similar activities are likely, the use of General permits will eliminate repetitive evaluation and documentation for individual discharges.

(b) The Guidelines user, including the agency or agencies responsible for implementing the Guidelines, must recognize the different levels of effort that should be associated with varying degrees of impact and require or prepare commensurate documentation. The level of documentation should reflect the significance and complexity of the discharge activity.

(c) An essential part of the evaluation process involves making determinations as to the relevance of any portion(s) of the Guidelines and conducting further evaluation only as needed. However, where portions of the