

Maintenance Dredging of Accumulated Sediment

The following paragraphs discuss requirements for the removal of accumulated silts and sediments from reservoirs impounded by dams. Please be sure to read this page in its entirety.

Pursuant to Section 105.131(c) of the Department's Rules and Regulations, removal of accumulated sediments from the reservoir of a **jurisdictional dam** is considered maintenance and does not require a permit under the Dam Safety and Encroachments Act.

Section 105.12(a)(14) of the Department's Rules and Regulations waives the requirement of a Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permit for removal of accumulated sediments from an artificial pond or reservoir impounded by a **non-jurisdictional dam**.

Any activity expanding the reservoir area or its depth does not qualify as maintenance and therefore requires a Water Obstruction and Encroachment Permit.

Because the reservoir impounded by a dam is considered waters of the United States, Federal authorization may be required under the provision of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, as amended, and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899.

To apply for Federal authorization to remove accumulated silts and sediments, **two copies** of the following information should be forwarded to the Bureau of Waterways Engineering, Division of Dam Safety, P.O. Box 8554, Harrisburg, PA, 17105-8554:

- The name and address of the dam owner.
- A copy of the USGS topographic map indicating the location of the dam and reservoir. For large impoundments, specify the location of proposed sediment removal.
- Results of the completed PNDI Project Planning Environmental Review form, along with comment forms from resource agencies if applicable. An on-line version of the PNDI Planning Tool is available at: <http://www.naturalheritage.state.pa.us/>.
- A scaled plan view showing the dam and impoundment area, aerial extent of maintenance dredging (indicate the total area to be dredged in square feet or acres), and the proposed depths.
- A narrative indicating how and what type of equipment will be used to remove the sediment.

- A plan, including a location map, showing the proposed dredge disposal area and its proximity to any streams, floodways or wetlands.
- Color photographs of the impoundment area and the dredge disposal site.
- For jurisdictional dams, reference the DEP File Number if known. If unsure whether the dam is jurisdictional, include information about the dam's height, length, surface area and storage capacity.

The Department will review the above information and provide written correspondence regarding state approval. If the dam is jurisdictional, a copy of the dredging request will be forwarded to the appropriate Army Corps of Engineers District Office for review.

A plan for controlling erosion and sediment must be developed and implemented during sediment removal. This plan may require a permit or prior approval. You may contact your County Conservation District concerning erosion and sedimentation control requirements.

If the completion of the proposed work necessitates the partial or complete draining of the pool behind the dam, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission may require a Drawdown Permit. An electronic version of the application form may be found at: <http://www.fish.state.pa.us/images/pages/forms/drawdown.pdf>. If you have any questions relative to the need for a Drawdown Permit, please contact the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission at 814-359-5117.