

Requirements for In-stream Construction Activities

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers shall be contacted for a review of the proposed In-stream work plan which must be approved by this office prior to the commencement of work. The plan shall meet the erosion and sediment control standards listed below and include means and methods for completing work within a waterway. All cofferdams shall be constructed to allow the passage of high flows, maintain downstream flows, and withstand anticipated erosive forces. Cofferdams shall be designed and installed so as not to impede the movement of aquatic organisms.

The following definitions apply to these notes:

Cofferdam: a temporary structure within a waterway or body of water designed to provide a dry work area for temporary construction activities and to contain disturbed soil and/or suspended sediments.

In-stream work area: work occurring at or below the ordinary high water mark (OHWM) of a waterway or the normal water level (NWL) of abutting wetlands, including adjacent uplands.

Dewatering: the removal of water with the purpose of creating a dry work area for temporary construction activities.

Work within a waterway must meet the following standards:

1. Work in the waterway should be timed to take place during low or no-flow conditions. Low flow conditions are flow at or below the normal water elevation.
2. The plan will be designed to allow for the conveyance of the 2-year peak flow past the work area without overtopping the cofferdam. The Corps has the discretion to reduce this requirement if documented by the applicant to be infeasible or unnecessary.
3. Water shall be isolated from the in-stream work area using a cofferdam constructed of non-erodible materials (steel sheets, aqua barriers, rip rap and geotextile liner, etc.). Earthen cofferdams are not permissible.
4. The cofferdam must be constructed from the upland area and no equipment may enter flowing water at any time. If the installation of the cofferdam cannot be completed from shore and access is needed to reach the area to be coffered, other measures, such as the construction of a causeway, will be necessary to ensure that equipment does not enter the water. Once the cofferdam is in place and the isolated area is dewatered, equipment may enter the coffered area to perform the required work.
5. If bypass pumping is necessary, the intake hose shall be placed on a stable surface or floated to prevent sediment from entering the hose. The bypass discharge shall be placed on a non-erodible, energy dissipating surface prior to rejoining the stream flow and shall not cause erosion. Filtering of bypass water is not necessary unless the bypass water has become sediment-laden as a result of the current construction activities.
6. During dewatering of the coffered work area, all sediment-laden water must be filtered to remove sediment. Possible options for sediment removal include baffle systems, anionic polymers systems, dewatering bags, or other appropriate methods. Water shall have sediment removed prior to being re-introduced to the downstream waterway. A stabilized conveyance from the dewatering device to the waterway must be identified in the plan. Discharge water is considered clean if it does not result in a visually identifiable degradation of water clarity.
7. The area from the toe to the top of the side slope shall be temporarily stabilized during construction to reduce the potential for erosion. All areas disturbed due to construction activities shall be restored to proposed conditions and fully stabilized prior to accepting flows.