

## Waterway/Wetland-Related Projects

So you're thinking about building/ improving a trail which involves a waterway or wetland! Don't forget to call your DNR office early in the planning process.

Many activities affecting navigable waters require permits or approvals from the Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Most of the physical alterations to navigable waters which may require permits can be found at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waterways/>. If you are considering a project that involves any of the activities listed, or that may affect public waters or wetlands, the following four items should be considered in your project planning:

1. Consult with your County's Snowmobile Coordinator to determine if the project is on a funded trail. If so, grants may be available to pay for the project. More information can be located at <http://dnr.wi.gov/Aid/Grants.html>.
2. Determine if any regulations or permit requirements apply. You can obtain information or application materials either on this website, or by mail. You may also call the local Water Regulation staff person to get advice and determine what activities may require permits/approvals.
3. Complete a permit application. You will generally need to submit the following:
  - o description of activity including location and design,
  - o purpose of activity,
  - o plans showing location and design of the project, and
  - o for certain projects, proof of ability to carry out the project.
4. After receiving your application DNR staff will review your proposal, and may inspect the project site. You may be required to publish a notice in the local paper or otherwise notify affected people in the project area.
5. If your project is approved, you will receive a formal permit or project approval. The permit will contain conditions that you must follow during the project's construction. Be sure you have obtained any necessary federal and local permits that may be required.
6. Permit timelines can range from 30-135 days, depending on if it is eligible for a General Permit or an Individual Permit. More information on permit timelines can be located at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Waterways/Permits/PermitProcess.html>.
7. Application fees can range from \$303 to \$800 or more depending on the different activities that may be proposed. More information on application fees can be located at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/waterways/documents/PermitDocs/feesheet.pdf>.
8. Waterway projects authorized under Ch 30 that are funded in whole or in part by any Federal or State agency do not require an application fee. Wetland projects need to be conducted by a federal or state agency in order to be exempt from the application fee.

## Wetland disturbance

Wetlands are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE), the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and by local counties, cities and villages.

If you think you have a project that may be located in a low area or wetland area please contact your local Water Management Specialist or USACOE Staff that covers your area

<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Waterways/contacts.html#county>. They will determine if a permit or approval is needed and can give you advice on what type of crossing could be permitted in that area or if the area should be avoided.

The excavating or placement of any material in low areas or wetlands requires a DNR permit. The DNR has both general permits and individual permits available. DNR reviews your project to determine if it complies with the requirements of section 281.36, Wis. Statutes, and NR 299 and NR 103, Wisconsin Administrative Code. State regulations require avoidance of wetland fill if possible, so in your application you will need to demonstrate that you cannot avoid or reduce wetland impacts, and that your project will not have significant adverse impacts on wetland functions and values. More information about wetland regulations can be located at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Waterways/construction/wetlands.html>. The permitting process can take many months to complete so advanced planning is necessary.