



ENVIRONMENTAL BULLETIN

SUMMER 2009

This bulletin will be distributed quarterly to provide Project Managers and district environmental staff with current permit requirements and other environmental information.

STORMWATER PERMITS

Stormwater Inspections

You may notice that we are using some new stormwater inspection forms. In order to avoid confusion those forms are summarized below.

- **DR519 (Inspection and Maintenance Report Form)** - This is a required inspection form used for the Bi-Weekly SWPPP inspections. This form applies to all projects that were Let prior to May 2009. The form is available on the NDOR server in (DORFORMS) and is also located on the Stormwater Website at <http://www.nebraskatransportation.org/environment/swppp.htm>
- **DR519 Excel (Inspection and Maintenance Report Form)** – This is the new form that will be used for all Bi-Weekly SWPPP inspections on projects that were Let after May 2009. This form is in Excel format and includes the Environmental Commitment Deficiency Notification. The new form is available on the NDOR server in (DORFORMS) as well as the Stormwater Website listed above.
- **Environmental Compliance Audit Form** – This is a more detailed inspection form (excel format) that should be used by the Environmental Compliance Team as an internal oversight tool. These reports are not included in the SWPPP and are typically done on a monthly basis. The Environmental Compliance Inspection and Oversight Plan details how this inspection process should be coordinated. District Environmental Coordinators will soon be receiving a list of projects requiring these Environmental Audits as well as the frequency they should be administered. If you need an electronic copy of this form please contact our office.

Contact Information: Gabe Robertson – (402) 479-4685

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Hot and Dry: a Seed Story

To begin germinating, the first thing a planted seed does is to take in water. The amount of water soaked up depends on how much water is available, in addition to some characteristics of the seed itself. The seed can “attract” water from as far away as approximately ½ inch, with good seed – soil contact. Once adequate water is soaked up by the seed, then chemical changes begin in the seed, resulting in growth of a root and stem.

Until the new plant can begin photosynthesizing, it is dependent on the food stored in the seed. Photosynthesis generally begins when leaves and a root system have developed. During this period of transition between use of stored food in the seed and making food on its own, the seed is vulnerable to extreme conditions.

NDOR's seeding specification states that seeding should not occur in July. The reasoning behind this restriction is that the soil is too hot and precipitation generally is too infrequent in mid-summer to give newly-planted seeds what they need for germination and initial seedling growth. In July, soil temperature just below the soil surface can be hotter than the air above the soil! Potentially, seed planted into hot, dry soil could die and never germinate.

Resuming seeding operations when soil temperature is cooler and rain is more likely gives the roadside seed mixture a better chance of becoming established and working for NDOR to stabilize soil.

Contact information: Carol Wienhold – (402) 479-3917 & Ron Poe – (402) 479-4499

WETLANDS and SECTION 404 PERMITS

September 15th Special Condition

If you have a 404 permitted area on your project, try to have the area seeded prior to September 15th if at all possible. After September 15th, we are required to install erosion control blanket in areas adjacent to the 404 permitted areas. Below is the current language in the 404 permit regarding this Special Condition:

All Areas disturbed by construction, and all bank slopes of constructed channels, shall be revegetated with appropriate perennial, native grasses and forbs and maintained in this condition. Reed Canary Grass (Phalaris arundinacea), Purple Loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria) and Smooth Brome (Bromus inermis) are not appropriate choices of vegetation. The disturbed areas shall be reseeded concurrent with the project or immediately upon completion. Revegetation shall be acceptable when ground cover of desirable species reaches 75%. If the seeding cannot be accomplished by September 15 in the year of project completion, then an erosion blanket shall be placed on the disturbed slopes adjacent to the channel. The erosion blanket shall remain in place until ground cover of desirable species reaches 75%. If the seeding can be accomplished by September 15, all seeded areas shall be properly mulched to prevent additional erosion.

Contact Information: Jason Jurgens – (402) 479-4418.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Primary Migratory Bird Nesting Season

For a few years we had been referring to the time frame from April 1st through July 15th as the "primary nesting season". While it was nice to be able to have a guide to help us determine when nesting was most likely to happen, July 15th unfortunately became known as the date when nests and young could be taken.

This is not the case. Many birds have multiple broods during the breeding season, with swallows and mourning doves being some of the more common species to do so. No active nests, those with eggs or young present, can be taken regardless of the date. If you need to remove brush/trees or work on drainage structures (bridges or culverts) call the environmental section to determine whether a survey is needed.

Contact Information: Eric Zach – (402) 479-4766, Dionne Gioia – (402) 263-2123

BILL'S CORNER

New Special Provision - Temporary Water Pollution Control

The NDOR began using a new special provision titled Temporary Water Pollution Control in the May 21st, 2009 Letting. It voids Section 204 of the 2007 Edition of the Standard Specifications for Highway Construction. It better defines NDOR and Contractor environmental responsibilities, NDOR-Certified Erosion and Sediment Control Inspectors/Responsibilities, Environmental Commitment Document and provides enforcement.

The new special provision contains the following sections:

- Construction Stormwater Management Control
- Limitation of Operations
- Construction Methods
- Environmental Commitment Document
- Environmental Commitment Document Enforcement

Please review the special provisions of your contract to determine if it is included. This special provision is NOT RETROACTIVE! It must be included as a special provision to be in effect for your project.

Contact Information: Bill Hitzeman – (402) 479-4456

UPCOMING TRAINING

- Erosion and Sediment Control for Inspectors – (September 15th, Kearney)
- Erosion and Sediment Control for Designers – (September 16th, 17th, Lincoln)

Contact Ron Poe at (402) 479-4499 or Dennis Smith with LTAP at (402) 472-0976 for more information.