



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

New England Field Office  
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<http://www.fws.gov/newengland>

September 24, 2018

To whom it may concern:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) reviewed the stormwater discharge activities associated with the 2017 National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) New Hampshire (NH) Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) general permit (2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit) issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We determined those activities may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect, certain species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) when specific conditions are met. When these conditions are met, we do not need to review individual projects. These comments are provided in accordance with section 7 of the ESA and complement existing 2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit Appendix C Guidance. We understand the applicant is acting as a non-Federal representative of the EPA for the purpose of consultation under section 7. **This letter provides additional guidance for meeting Criterion B and should be submitted as part of your application package to the EPA.**

If the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation website (<https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/>) indicates your 2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit project action area may contain one or more of the following federally listed endangered species: roseate tern (*Sterna dougallii*), dwarf wedgemussel (*Alasmidonta heterodon*), Karner blue butterfly (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*), northeastern bulrush (*Scirpus ancistrochaetus*), or Jesup's milk-vetch (*Astragalus robbinsii* var. *jesupi*); threatened species: Canada lynx (*Lynx Canadensis*), piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), or red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*); or their federally designated critical habitat; and the specific conditions listed below are met, you may submit this letter to complete the **2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit Appendix C: Step 4** in place of a concurrence letter for informal consultation as documentation of ESA eligibility for **USFWS Criterion B**.

In addition, this letter also satisfies the requirement in the **2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit Appendix C: Step 2 (3)** to contact the USFWS and obtain a concurrence letter, if you have not yet done so. If your project action area includes one or more of the above-listed species *and* one or more of the species listed under **Criterion C**,<sup>1</sup> you may still use this letter to certify under

<sup>1</sup> Criterion C includes guidance for project action areas that may contain species for which EPA has already made a determination. These species include the northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) and small whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*) (2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit Appendix C: Step 3 – Determine if You Can Meet Eligibility USFWS Criterion C).

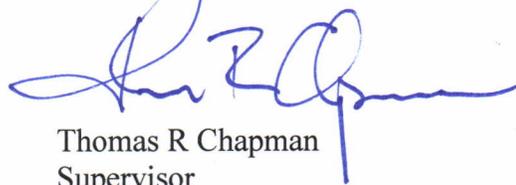
**Criterion B.** All existing guidance regarding requirements for certifying eligibility according to the USFWS Criterion A, B, or C for coverage by the 2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit (see 2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit Appendix C – Endangered Species Guidance) remains unchanged.

We have determined that proposed stormwater discharge activities covered under the 2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit *may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect*, the above-listed species and the species' critical habitat when the following are true:

1. all stormwater discharges are pre-existing or previously permitted by EPA;
2. any planned operations and maintenance work covered by this permit will only affect previously disturbed areas where stormwater controls are already installed. In these situations the chance of encountering any of the subject species is discountable;
3. the project implements EPA MS4 Best Management Practices (BMPs) and meets Clean Water Act and New Hampshire Water Quality Standards. Although permitted discharges may reach the environment used by these species, BMPs reduce pollutants to the extent that discharges are not known to have measurable impacts on these species or their habitat;
4. no new construction or structural BMPs are proposed under this permit at this time; and
5. you agree that if, during the course of the permit term, you plan to install a structural BMP not identified in the Notice of Intent (NOI), you will re-initiate consultation with the USFWS as necessary (see **2017 NH Small MS4 General Permit Appendix C: Step 2 (5)**).

If the above criteria are met, further consultation with the USFWS under section 7 of the ESA is not required at this time; however, if the proposed action changes in any way such that it may affect a listed species in a manner not previously analyzed or if new information reveals the presence of additional listed species that may be affected by the project, the applicant or the EPA should contact us immediately and suspend activities that may affect those species until the appropriate level of consultation is completed with our office. Thank you for your cooperation, and please contact David Simmons of this office at (603) 227-6425 if you have questions or need further assistance.

Sincerely yours,



Thomas R Chapman  
Supervisor  
New England Field Office