



News release

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**Contacts: New Hampshire, Dept. of Environmental Services, James Martin, 603-271-3710
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England, Tim Dugan, 978-318-8264**

New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sign New Hampshire In-Lieu Fee Agreement *Program balances growth with natural resource conservation*

CONCORD, N.H. – The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District (Corps) announced today that they have signed a joint agreement regarding the New Hampshire In-Lieu Fee Program. This program has established the New Hampshire Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund (the ARM Fund) to provide an alternative to site-specific wetland mitigation for people seeking permits that have impacts on wetlands or waters of the United States. The Agreement between NHDES and the Corps will both streamline the permit processing and provide for significant environmental benefits.

Previously, site-specific mitigation that was required for small scale development projects resulted in limited environmental benefits due to the size, location, and type of the mitigation activities. Under this new program, the NHDES and the Corps are now able to collect and pool funds contributed by these small projects to fund watershed improvement projects that will result in significant improvements through watershed improvement and protection.

“The in-lieu fee program has been in place at NHDES since August of 2006 and provides many benefits. These include opportunities for municipalities to accomplish high priority wetland conservation goals and an option for developers who aren’t able to provide on-site mitigation. This program provides them with the option of mitigating impacts through a payment to the Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund, and an opportunity for the State to accomplish restoration and conservation projects with greater aquatic resource value,” noted NHDES Commissioner Tom Burack.

“After all efforts have been made to avoid or minimize those impacts, this program will provide permit applicants an efficient and workable alternative while providing a better outcome for our wetland habitats,” said Colonel Curtis Thalken, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District. “The fees will be used to restore, create, and/or preserve

aquatic resources and their associated uplands. We are pleased that the Corps is working with NHDES to make the ARM Fund available for federal permit applicants.”

More information on the New Hampshire In-Lieu Fee Agreement and ARM Fund is available on the on the DES website at <http://des.nh.gov/Wetlands/helpdocs.htm> or on the Corp website at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>. Select Regulatory/Permitting and then Mitigation and select “New Hampshire In-Lieu Fee Agreement.”