

Department of State Lands Strategy for E-permitting and Process Improvements.

December 9, 2008



DSL is working on several initiatives to create a more applicant-friendly permit process by:

- ◆ Using clear language
- ◆ Identifying what is needed from, and expected of, applicants
- ◆ Providing resources to explain the permitting process and regulations.
- ◆ Making the process commensurate with size and scope of the project
- ◆ Minimizing hurdles, duplication and bureaucracy

Phase 1 is expected to be in place by early 2009, and includes the basic level of function for many of the project areas identified below.

Phase 2 will involve the addition of resources and e-forms, and is anticipated to be in place by late 2009. Additional phases and upgrades will follow in the future, as agency resources allow.

As this transition will take time and additional resources, many of the initial efforts will be focused on improving the processes for restoration-related efforts, while also providing benefits for other types of projects. DSL has determined that taking small steps and keeping each element in a stand-alone package will reduce the possibility of having problems compound during development. It will also allow for testing and refinement of each key element during each phase.

Based on customer input and process evaluation, the following are being developed as the frame of our e-permitting and process improvement efforts:

➤ **Wizard for Common In-water Projects** - <http://licenseinfo.oregon.gov/>

This is a joint effort between DSL and the Department of Consumer and Business Services. This tool is designed to facilitate common "Google" type searches to locate the necessary permitting information and navigate complex regulations.

- ◆ Online tool to identify agencies and permits necessary for "common in-water projects"
- ◆ Includes state and federal agencies and permits, eventually may tie in with local agencies
- ◆ First version was completed December 2007

➤ **New Application** (E-forms)

The intent of revising the application is to decrease the amount of staff time spent on application reviews and improve applicants' success in filling out applications correctly and completely the first time. The new format will no longer utilize a "one-size application fits all" approach. The information required in an application would be based on the type, scale and level of impact of the project. The new format would also provide information necessary for the Corps of Engineers' review.

The first step will be to redesign and convert existing forms into an e-form. The first application revisions should be deployed by early 2009 with all versions in place by to early to mid-2009.

- ◆ Redesign application to make it easier and clearer to fill out
- ◆ Develop an application format that is commensurate with project type and scope
- ◆ Develop standard format for all application types
- ◆ Embed help features (Links to "Resource Library" discussed below)
- ◆ Move toward accepting applications on-line
- ◆ Eventually provide other e-forms (delineation reports, jurisdiction requests)

➤ **On-line Permitting Assistance/Resource Library** (available as HTML or PDF)

This includes guidance and resources necessary for completing an application or developing a project. Currently, available information is very limited and will require time and significant staff resources to develop. With limited funding and staff resources, DSL anticipates phasing this development in over several years with the first phase in place by early 2009.

- ◆ Web site improvements – complete by early 2009
- ◆ Process and procedures manual - complete “backbone” by early 2009
 - Project Development Guidance (BMPs, standards, expectations, minimization)
 - Application Help (process clarification, glossary, sample drawings and forms)
 - Links (technical resources, other agency information)
 - Audio/video clips (common answers/help, project examples)
- ◆ GIS tools and resources – First phase of development completed by mid to late 2009
 - Provide Information necessary to fill out an application
 - ESH, SSW, know delineation and mitigation sites
 - Receive Information relevant to agency needs
 - Project sites, mitigation sites and delineation boundaries
 - Eventually integrate information exchange into e-form as part of a “smart” application and submission process

➤ **On-Line File/Application Management Tool**

The intent of this is to develop a one-stop, Web-based interface where applicants and DSL staff alike can access or provide information relevant to the application being processed. Ultimately this can be adapted to allow applicants to submit and track their applications electronically, and for file and data sharing among various agencies. This will be the last piece to be developed, with the initial phase in place by mid-2009.

- ◆ Use to share application information among agencies
- ◆ Allow on-line submission of application and attachments (delineations, BA, etc)
- ◆ Track application comments, status and make revisions

➤ **Expedited General Authorizations**

On May 1, DSL adopted by rule a new [General Authorization](#) (GA) for placement of large wood and boulders to assist voluntary habitat restoration efforts. With a 15-day turnaround, the permit was developed in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and has standards that are acceptable for both state and federal jurisdictions. The new GA also was written to incorporate plain language and limit the use of technical jargon. On Aug. 1, the Corps adopted their compatible Regional General Permit. This approach will be evaluated during the 2009 permitting season to determine if our objectives are met. If successful, DSL may pursue similar approaches for other restoration actions in the future.

➤ **General Permits**

This is a new concept approved by the Oregon legislature in July 2007, which allows applicants who routinely do the same type of projects, with predictable impacts and outcomes, to apply for one permit to cover multiple projects. This will reduce the amount of time spent by applicants and DSL on application processing and reduce the regulatory unknowns for applicants. DSL is currently in the pilot phase of implementation.

➤ **Rule revisions**

DSL is also looking at the core of our everyday operations, our rules, and in some cases our statutes with the intent to improve the language and clarity, improve their organization and flow, reflect changes in science and policy, and move towards both outcome- and watershed-based approaches. A complete reorganization of the rules and an update of several sections will be completed this year and is anticipated to be in place by February 1, 2009.

For more information on these efforts please contact Kevin Herkamp at 503-986-5305