Buffer Requirement Guidance

The 2017 Construction General Permit, Section 2.2.1 requires that a natural buffer be maintained on construction sites within 50ft of surface water. See below beginning on page 2, the following flow charts are meant to aid planners and engineers in deciding how to apply the requirements and exemptions to their construction site by summarizing these details in a logical flow chart. Close coordination with the District Environmental Planner is still required before proceeding with a course of action.

For further information or help using these charts, contact Matt Carlson, ITD HQ Environmental, 334-8631.
Part 1: Buffer Decision Flow Chart

Is surface water located within 50ft of your proposed construction site?  

NO  

No additional requirements. Implement appropriate perimeter controls for your site.

YES  

Can stormwater discharge to surface water from your proposed construction site?  

NO  

Ensure proper functioning of implemented berm or barrier, no additional requirements. Implement appropriate perimeter controls for your site.

YES  

Does the project meet the definition of a “linear project” (see appendix A)?  

NO  

If site constraints exists (e.g., limited right of way), no additional buffer requirements. Limit disturbances within 50ft and implement appropriate perimeter controls for your site.

If NO site constraints exist, continue to next step in flow chart.

YES  

Is the project approved under at CWA section 404 permit? Or is the project a water dependent structure or water access area (e.g., pier, boat ramp, trail)?  

NO  

No additional requirements. Implement appropriate perimeter controls for your site.

YES  

Proceed to Part 2, “Buffer Design Flow Chart”
Part 2: Buffer Design Flow Chart

Is a 50ft natural buffer present at my pre-construction site?

- **NO**
  - Retain and protect existing buffer, if any. If portions of the buffer will be removed, implement controls to maintain removal equivalency of original natural buffer. Implement appropriate perimeter controls for your site.

- **YES**
  - Will my activities remove any portion of the natural (50 ft) buffer?
    - **NO**
      - Comply with alternative 2.2.1.a.i
    - **YES**
      - Will my activities remove a portion (<50 ft), but not all of the natural buffer?
        - **NO**
          - Project will remove the entire existing natural buffer. Comply with alternative 2.2.1.a.iii
        - **YES**
          - Comply with alternative 2.2.1.a.ii