

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**Department of Environmental Services**  
**Wetlands Bureau Permitting– Performance Audit**  
**AUDIT FINDING Corrective Action Plan**

**Completion Status:**

- Open** •
- Partially Resolved** ••
- Substantially Resolved** •••
- Fully Resolved** ••••

**June 2020 Corrective Action Status**

**Department of Environmental Services Approach:** The Department is taking an Adaptive Management approach to the Corrective Action Plan. As work progresses, we will evaluate outcomes and adjust timelines and approaches to ensure each recommendation is fully addressed. Timelines and due dates may change, resulting in earlier or later finish, based on factors such as the rulemaking process, legislative changes, legal actions, Federal law, availability of resources, and economic considerations. While the Adaptive Management approach may affect timelines and approaches related to any of the audit observations, we anticipate that it may particularly affect Observations No. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 18, 39, 43, 44, and 50.

<b>Obs #</b>	<b>Observation Title</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Completion Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>1</b>	Strengthen The Department’s Operating Environment And Organizational Culture	The Department of Environmental Services (Department) develop and maintain an operating environment and culture supporting effective management control. Ensure processes and practices are adequately controlled; ensure existing controls are reviewed to ensure they are sufficiently designed, operating as intended, not circumvented, and are regularly monitored; ensure processes allow employees to report deviations without fear of retaliation or repercussion; and ensure managers demonstrate	Strengthen existing management controls, Develop management controls where absent, including process for reporting deviations without retaliation, Establish and implement review timeline for controls, set expectations for managers regarding implementation of management controls and evaluate managers annually based on these expectations.	7/2022	••	

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		the importance of management controls.				
2	Improve Strategic Management And Planning	<p>The Department create a strategic plan. Ensure the Division of water (Division) and Wetlands Bureau (Bureau) develop complimentary strategies and plans; incorporate remediation of audit findings; develop a remedial action plan; engage the Wetland Council (Council) on long-range planning; develop performance measures tied to strategic goals, plans, and initiatives; and track performance.</p> <p>The Division and Bureau develop strategies and implementing plans to help ensure strategic objectives are achieved.</p>	<p>Develop an updated Department strategic plan. Develop complimentary strategic and implementation plans for Divisions and Programs.</p> <p>Regularly engage the Wetlands Council.</p> <p>Develop performance measures tied to goals of Strategic Plan and Strategy Implementation Plans.</p>	7/2021	••	The department reviewing our updated Strategic Plan to ensure that it will adequately address current and future environmental and public health threats, maximize opportunities, and focus on areas for improvement. The department is currently evaluating next steps in light of additional delays and planning challenges caused by COVID-19.
3	Establish And Formalize Risk Management Policy And Practices	<p>The Department establish formal agency-wide risk management policy and processes tied to strategy and plans. Develop measurable risk tolerances; and monitor controls.</p> <p>The Division and Bureau implement the Department's risk management policies and practices.</p>	<p>Develop Department risk management policy and processes including measurable risk tolerances.</p> <p>Monitor compliance with risk management policy.</p> <p>Develop and track Program risk management plans.</p>	7/2021	••	Risk management outline has been drafted and schedule is under review.

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4	Timely Resolve External Audit And Assessment Findings	Department management comply with Executive Orders on audit reporting; Assign responsibility for audit finding remediation; timely resolve audit findings; incorporate audit remediation processes into strategy and plans; and track remediation and ensure timely progress towards achieving full remediation. The Bureau remediate findings from prior audits and evaluations.	Develop corrective action plan for 2019 audit and submit to DAS. Report semiannually to DAS on progress. Report monthly on progress to DES Audit Executive Oversight Committee. Develop procedure for documenting completion of each audit recommendation. Incorporate tracking of previous audit findings into new tracking and reporting system.	7/2022	••	
5	Improve And Expand Performance Measurement Systems	Department management develop a performance measurement system tied to strategy, risk tolerances, and outcomes; ensure performance measurement is coordinated; address deficiencies with information technology system design and data quality control; collect data timely; and regularly assess performance. The Division and Bureau develop performance measurement systems to help ensure agency performance is measured and strategic objectives are achieved.	Update and establish strategic, operational, and strategic implementation plans. Establish Risk Management policy.  Establish outcome-related measures related to plans and policy. Monitor the timeliness and quality of data entry.  Update database to track measures.  Incorporate outcome-based measures in staff performance evaluations.	12/2022	••	

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<b>6</b>	Improve Management Of Wetlands Bureau Employees	Department management improve management of staff; develop and implement workforce, succession, and contingency plans; identify and use data to inform workforce planning efforts; develop performance expectations linked to goals and objectives; routinely measure staff performance; ensure staff receive performance evaluations; develop systems to identify staff noncompliance with policies, standard operating procedures, and standards of conduct; address staff noncompliance; and assess workloads.	Appoint new Water Division Director and LRM Manager. Develop workforce succession, and contingency plans based on data. Develop performance expectations that support goals and objectives. Evaluate staff annually. Develop and implement systems to identify and address staff compliance with policies, procedures, and standards. Assess and redistribute workloads based on workload data.	11/2021	••	Management has established weekly wetlands bureau permit supervisor meeting to assess wetlands bureau workloads. All wetlands bureau SOPs and procedures have been reviewed and a plan is in place to revoke outdated SOPs. New SOPs have been developed to address Audit.
<b>7</b>	Improve Transparency Control Systems	Department management create goals, plans, policies, and procedures to ensure transparent operation; monitor compliance; utilize the Council to obtain advice; and ensure compliance with statute when establishing advisory committees.	Develop Department transparency control system.  Monitor compliance with transparency controls.  Communicate regularly with the Wetlands Council.  Establish policy on advisory committee use based on DOJ opinion.	8/2021	••	Transparency plan outline has been drafted and is under review.
<b>8</b>	Ensure The Wetlands Council Fulfills Its Statutory Roles	The Commissioner meet with the Council quarterly and	Commissioner attend Wetlands Council	5/2019	••••	

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		leverage the Council as statute provided.	meetings at least quarterly. LRM Manager attend all Wetlands Council meetings.			
<b>9</b>	Simplify And Constrain Rules	Department management constrain rules to statutory purpose; seek clarification from the Legislature whether public safety issues may be considered during permit application review and if guidance in statute is insufficiently clear to develop simple and constrained rules.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules.	12/2019	•••	
<b>10</b>	Improve Reasonableness Of Underpinnings To Regulatory Framework	Department management improve reasonableness of Bureau rules to ensure requirements are underpinned by objective standards and tied to permitting outcomes; and remove from rule any requirements without objective underpinnings and clear ties to permitting outcomes.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules.	12/2023	•••	All rules were revised and updated, approved by JLCAR, adopted and effective 12-15-19. NHDES also filed Emergency rules on 12-23-19, rules amendments were adopted on 12-24-19, and additional proposed rules have been filed May, 2020.
<b>11</b>	Understand And Quantify Economic Effect Of Regulatory Framework	Department management clearly demonstrate the balance between environmental benefits and the economic costs of Bureau regulation; develop policy for evaluating economic impact of Bureau regulatory activities; train staff in the	Research and establish policy for determining economic impact of regulatory activities. Train staff and monitor compliance.	11/2021	•	

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		Department's policy; and monitor rulemaking and permitting activities to ensure employees comply.				
12	Ensure Rules Are Clear, Comprehensive, And Consistent	Department management review statutes, rules, forms, supplemental materials, procedures, and other elements to identify requirements affecting non-employees; amend rules to include missing definitions, procedures, practices, and requirements, and correct ambiguities, inaccuracies, and inconsistencies; amend rules to clarify jurisdiction; amend forms, supplemental materials, procedures, and practices to ensure they reflect statute and rules; and develop procedures over rule quality to ensure rules are reviewed and well maintained.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules.	12/2019	....	
13	Discontinue Ad Hoc Rulemaking	Department management discontinue ad hoc rulemaking; develop policy and procedure to ensure employees do not undertake ad hoc rulemaking; monitor organizational behavior to help ensure ad hoc rulemaking does not occur; review requirements imposed upon the public; amend policy, procedure, and practice that	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules.  Train staff on ad hoc rulemaking prevention, and monitor decisions to ensure staff are not making ad hoc rules.	12/2020	...	New SOP adopted to prevent Ad hoc rulemaking (AHR), new AHR prevention plan being developed, and all SOPs have been reviewed and are being updated. A mandatory training on Prevention of ad hoc rulemaking for all wetlands bureau

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		rest upon ad hoc rules; and ensure standards-setting manuals and similar materials incorporated into Department rules are not used to develop ad hoc rules.				staff is scheduled for June, 2020.
<b>14</b>	Discontinue Enforcing Expired Wetlands Rules	Department management discontinue enforcing expired rules; develop policy and procedure designed to ensure rules remain valid and expired rules are not enforced; and timely update expired rules.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules. Develop schedule for future review and revision of Wetlands Rules.	5/2020	....	
<b>15</b>	Ensure Forms And Supplemental Materials Comply With Statute	Department management adopt forms, and requirements in supplemental materials, in rule; discontinue enforcing unadopted requirements; and develop policy and procedure to generate, adopt, amend forms . as required by law; and reconcile discrepancies between rules and current forms and supplemental materials.	Revise Wetlands Rules to incorporate forms and address these recommendations and adopt revised rules.	12/2019	....	
<b>16</b>	Remediate Technical Deficiencies In Rules	Department management correct miscitations, define ambiguous terms, and ensure third-party materials are incorporated in rule; cite statutory references; ensure discretionary decision- making rules implement statute; and develop procedures to track rule revisions.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules. Develop procedures to track rule revisions.	9/2020	...	Developing procedures to track rule revisions.

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<b>17</b>	Produce And Maintain Comprehensive Policies And Procedures	Department management ensure the Bureau produces and updates comprehensive policy and procedure for its permitting programs; align policies and procedures with rules and statute; adopts policies and procedures with effect of rule, into rule; establish policies and procedures to ensure management monitors training on and compliance with policies and procedures; and publish current and future policies and procedures in a consistent format.	Inventory existing policies/procedures, update to align with rules and statutes and bring consistency to format. Establish policies and procedures, based on rules and statutes, in consistent format, where gaps exist. Establish schedule and tracking for policy/procedures updates and training.	3/2021	••	All wetlands bureau SOPs have been reviewed and new SOPs have been adopted and are being developed. Training on new SOPs is planned.
<b>18</b>	Improve Provision, Measurement, And Control Systems Over Customer Service	Department management develop, implement, and refine a holistic, coordinated customer service performance measurement system; ensure performance measurement is coordinated between Department, Division, and Bureau; develop, implement, integrate, and refine a complaint policy and procedure; ensure guidelines and other public-facing materials accurately reflect underlying rule-based standards, are clear, consistent, and readily available; and ensure customer service-related	Review and update Public Information and Permitting Unit role. Establish DES Customer Service Committee. Establish customer service policies, procedures, and performance measurement system, including documenting the requirements for review and approval of the content and format of public-facing documents.	12/2020	••	The last 2 years of customer service data has been reviewed, the LRM Customer Survey data has been reviewed internally, Wetlands Bureau Customer Service Response SOP has been drafted. New SOP takes into account Commissioner's Office April, 2019 Customer Service Response Guidelines and recent Lean event.



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		data are reliable and processed timely.				
<b>19</b>	Improve Consistency Of Permitting Decisions	Department management ensure consistent outcomes derive from Bureau permitting practices; develop consistency measures; evaluate and report on consistency; and regularly review permit processes and decisions.	Update Bureau Peer Review policy, including review authorities. Establish consistency measures and related schedule for consistency reporting and review.	9/2020	...	.
<b>20</b>	Improve Control System Over Permit Conditions	Department management ensure permit conditions are reasonable and comply with State law; ensure conditions are tied to permitting outcomes; adopt permit conditions in rule; adopt a process for modifying permit conditions in rule; and seek statutory changes to accommodate reasonable conditions on Shoreland permits. Bureau management cite relevant State and federal statutory and regulatory requirements when imposing permit conditions.	Update permit condition template language based on rules, statute, and desired outcomes, and cite rules in template language. Seek statute change to allow conditions in Shoreland permits.	12/2020	...	The statute has been amended to allow conditions in Shoreland permits. All template language is being updated. Shoreland condition rules have been drafted.
<b>21</b>	Clarify And Formalize Peer Review Policies And Monitor Compliance	Department management develop written peer review requirements; ensure requirements are communicated and employees trained; identify and record data necessary to document peer review; routinely monitor and measure	Update Bureau Peer Review policy, including review authorities and how to document peer review. Train employees, monitor compliance, and recognize compliance and follow up on noncompliance.	10/2020	...	Training and tracking mechanisms are scheduled.

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		compliance; and address noncompliance				
<b>22</b>	Improve Timeliness of Wetlands Bureau Permitting	Department management structure permit and notice application review process in rule with applicable time limits; establish goals and targets; ensure the database management system enables performance measurement; develop timeliness reports; develop policies on managerial oversight; develop policies and performance targets; and ensure staff compliance.	Update procedures and establish measures based on new Wetlands Rules. Update database to track the measures.  Establish a schedule for reporting and management review of employee compliance.	9/2020	••	Weekly permit timeliness number reports are provided to managers. Wetlands Bureau managers have been brainstorming on ways to address timeliness goals considering available resources and NHDES priorities.
<b>23</b>	Revise Department Of Transportation Permit Application Review Practices	Department management comply with statute and ensure Department of Transportation applications are processed according to statutory time limits, or seek statutory changes to accommodate its practices if necessary.	Process DOT applications according to statutory time limits.  Pursue statute amendment to allow memorandum of agreement between DOT and DES.	1/2020	••••	
<b>24</b>	Improve Wetlands Council Appeals Timeliness And Adherence To Statutory Requirements	Department management timely act on appeals; work with the Council to simplify and correct the Department's guidance documents; and provide clerical and technical support necessary to remediate deficiencies and monitor performance data.	Develop metrics for timeliness of acting on appeals and monitor them.  Communicate regularly with the Wetlands Council.	6/2020	••	

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			Provide support as requested by the Wetlands Council.			
<b>25</b>	Improve Management Of Wetlands Council Remands To The Department	Department management develop policy and procedures to timely resolve remands consistent with statute and Council rules.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules. Develop measures for timely acting on remands. Management monitor measures and assess compliance.	12/2020	...	Tracking reports to be developed.
<b>26</b>	Formalize And Leverage Application Receipt Center Processes	Department management adopt Application Receipt Center (ARC) rules; ensure reporting and oversight structures are clarified; establish performance measures and collect data; develop policies and procedures to ensure consistency; conduct adequate peer review; ensure delegations of authority are issued; and ensure Bureau practices conform to applicable requirements.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules.  Develop and revise procedures based on the revised rules. Review ARC practices for compliance with procedure.  Ensure delegations of authority are issued.	6/2020	...	Revised wetlands rules have been adopted, and the ARC procedures have been reviewed and revised. Delegations of authority are being developed. The ARC SOP is being revised and updated.
<b>27</b>	Formalize Requirements, Procedures, And Processes For Notice-only Wetlands Projects	Department management adopt notification process rules and establish procedures to address requests for more information (RFMI) and reclassifications.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules.	12/2019	....	
<b>28</b>	Formalize Expedited Evaluation of Permit Applications Under Extraordinary	Department management adopt the expedited evaluation of permit applications under extraordinary circumstances	Revoke expedited permit review SOP. Propose rules for expedited permit review.	12/2019	....	

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	Circumstances	process in rule and publicize the process.				
<b>29</b>	Establish Parameters for Conservation Commission Involvement In Permit Application Reviews Consistent With Statute	Department management base interaction with applicants and conservation commissions on statute; timely align practices, procedures, rules, and forms with statute; develop policies to ensure adequate data is collected; ensure conservation commissions are held to statutory time limits; and limit Department integration of conservation commissions into permitting processes to those provided in statute.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt and implement revised rules.	12/2020	...	Complete with the exception of developing policies to ensure adequate data is collected and Data analyst position was established to address this Audit. This position has been frozen because of the COVID-19 health emergency.
<b>30</b>	Implement Review Framework for Minimum Impact Expedited Projects Consistent With Statute	Department management adopt rules governing the minimum impact expedited (MIE) application process; include timeframes for processing MIE applications and timelines; monitor to ensure timely review; and amend policies, procedures, and forms.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt and implement revised rules.	12/2019	....	.
<b>31</b>	Improve Wetlands Permit-by-Notification-related Rules, Procedures, And Practices	Department management ensure permit-by notification (PBN) rules align with statute and forms align with requirements; develop policies and procedures to ensure consistent and equitable application of rules; and consider revising rules to ensure	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt and implement revised rules.	12/2020	...	Complete with the exception of: Data analyst position established has been frozen because of the COVID-19 health emergency.

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		requirements for project types are commensurate with level of impact.				
<b>32</b>	Improve Request For More Information Processes	Department management seek clarification from the Legislature as to whether the Shoreland RFMI response deadline should be extendable, and promulgate rules detailing RFMI processes. Bureau management revise policy and procedure to ensure RFMI practices conform to applicable requirements and develop policy and procedure	Update policy and procedures to align RMFI practices to rules and statute.	12/2020	...	RFMI SOP has been drafted and under review.
<b>33</b>	Improve Management Of Extensions Of Permit Application Technical Review Time Limits	Department management create rules and policies related to application review extensions; modify the database management system (DBMS) to track and manage extensions to ensure compliance with applicable requirements; and communicate availability of application extensions.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt and implement revised rules.  Modify database to track extensions.	12/2020	..	New rules proposed, new SOP developed, and tracking report developed.
<b>34</b>	Develop Rules and Policies for Reclassifying Applications and Amending Applications and Issued Permits	Department management promulgate rules defining the circumstances under which staff can reclassify and amend applications; and develop policy and procedure to describe reclassification and amendment of applications.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt revised rules.	03/2021	...	Spring, 2020 rules amendments includes new rules on amendment procedures.

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35	Comply With Statute And Implement Deemed Approved Permits	Department management discontinue efforts to circumvent legislative intent; adopt rules, policies, and procedures to implement the deemed approved provisions of statute; communicate the availability of the process; develop policy and procedure to ensure compliance; and seek statutory changes to clarify deemed approved provisions.	Train staff on statute. Develop and implement data quality control to prevent database errors that result in deemed approved permits.	12/2020	•••	Proposed rules filed May, 2020 includes Permit by Default process. SOP, tracking report, and training is planned based on this proposed rule.
36	Improve Systems For Managing Emergency Authorizations	Department management structure emergency authorization processes through rules, policies, and procedures; ensure rules are consistent, and practices adhere to delegation of authority requirements in rules; establish strategic objectives, goals, and performance targets for timely processing; ensure the DBMS enables performance measurement; develop reports, policies on managerial oversight, and performance targets; and ensure staff compliance.	Revise Wetlands Rules to address these recommendations and adopt and implement revised rules.	12/2020	•••	A Data Analyst position is being established to develop metrics and reports but position has been frozen due to Covid-19 health emergency.
37	Improve Systems For Managing After-the-fact Permit Applications	Department management structure after-the-fact permitting processes through rules, policies, and procedures; ensure rules are consistent, and	Revise Wetlands Rules.  Update policies and procedures based on new rules.	6/2021	•	Spring 2020 rules amendments include new procedures on After the fact applications and a new

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		practices adhere to delegation of authority requirements in rule; establish strategic objectives, goals, and performance targets for timely processing; ensure DBMS enables performance measurement; develop reports, policies on managerial oversight, and performance targets; and ensure staff compliance.	Establish measures based on strategic objectives, goals, and performance targets.  Update database to track measures.  Establish schedule for reporting and managerial review with follow up for noncompliance.			after the fact SOP has been adopted.  A business analyst position has been hired and a data analyst position established (but frozen) to address the recommendations in this observation.
38	Resolve Prior Audit Findings And Other Issues Related To Fees And Mitigation Accounts	Department management review fee structures to ensure fees are appropriate; expunge Shoreland PBN fee forfeitures from rule; collect statutorily-required fees or seek a statutory amendment if there are reasons fees could or should not be assessed; develop and implement policies and procedures; rationalize the cost to administer the Aquatic Resource Compensatory Mitigation (ARM) Fund against the administrative assessment; and seek clarification on the ARM Fund and whether administrative assessments should be a separate account.	Complete resolution of previous audits and document completion.	3/2021	...	Separate mitigation account established, ILF assessment under review; 2 new mitigation SOPs were developed.  Actions are in progress on prior audit findings and overlap with this Audit's observation #s 17, 22, 29, 33, and 34.
39	Strategically Manage Organizational Structure	Department management integrate evaluations of efficiency and effectiveness	Update organizational charts and supplemental job descriptions.	11/2020	..	

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		of organizational structures with strategic and workforce planning and performance management efforts; monitor data and integrate results into planning; with the Council, assess factors affecting the operating environment; evaluate the effectiveness of permit application review processes; ensure organizational charts and human resources data are accurate; and strategically manage significant organizational changes.	Plan future organizational changes based to support efficiency and effectiveness for achieving the Bureau's strategic outcomes.			
40	Formally Delegate Statutory Authority	The Commissioner delegate authority to appropriate Department staff. Department management implement policies and procedures to ensure formal delegations of authority are followed and periodically reviewed for appropriateness.	Commissioner delegate authority, in writing, to appropriate staff.  Establish schedule and policy for delegation of authority updates and tracking.	9/2020	•	
41	Clarify And Rationalize Employee Responsibilities	Department management rationalize position classifications and employee responsibilities; ensure supplemental job descriptions reflect responsibilities; ensure supplemental job descriptions are signed, documented, and used during annual performance evaluations; ensure transparency and equity in the	Review and update all Bureau supplemental job descriptions.  Establish and use position-specific performance objectives for annual evaluations.  Establish procedure in which LRM Manager	12/2020	••	



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		assignment of responsibilities; ensure emphasis on the assignment and completion of permitting related responsibilities over non-related responsibilities; and develop a measure of permit application complexity to allocate permit application workloads.	reviews all performance evaluations and confirms SJD update.  Establish schedule for regularly reviewing workload and readjusting as warranted.			
42	Assess And Revise Managerial Workloads	Department management identify factors affecting Bureau supervisory workloads; develop and implement methods to measure and monitor factors affecting workload; review and adjust supervisory workloads and spans of control to improve organizational efficiency, including phasing out the two coastal sections.	Assess Bureau organization and supervisory workload, readjust as warranted to improve organizational efficiency.	1/2021	••	Weekly wetlands bureau assessment of workloads provided to NHDES management.
43	Clarify And Rationalize Wetlands Bureau Employee Credentialing Requirements	Department management determine which positions require professional credentials, ensure requirements are specified in supplemental job descriptions, and monitor compliance with requirements; determine which positions qualify for statutory exemptions to professional credentialing; ensure authority is delegated and requirements are specified in supplemental job descriptions; update peer	Evaluate how professional credentials apply to Bureau positions, and update supplemental job descriptions as warranted.  Align Peer Review policy with and develop employee training programs based on credential requirements identified through	11/2020	••	

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		review policy; and develop associated professional training and development programs for employees.	evaluation discussed above.			
44	Improve Employee Development Program	Department management integrate employee development with strategic and workforce planning efforts; identify and analyze data to inform employee development planning; conduct assessments of gaps in employee knowledge, skills, and abilities and operational performance; develop performance improvement targets, policies, and procedures; evaluate results of training sessions; ensure individual development plans and annual performance evaluations are completed; routinely update employee development plans; assess costs and benefits of development efforts; and communicate development program results and outcomes to internal and external stakeholders.	Based on strategic and workforce planning, develop data for use in employee development.  Assess areas in which employees need development and facilitate development in these areas.  Ensure development plans and evaluations are completed on time.  Communicate development program outcomes, costs, and benefits.	3/2021	••	
45	Clarify And Formalize Standards Of Professional Conduct And Monitor Compliance	Department management develop written standards of professional conduct; ensure standards and expectations are communicated; measure employee compliance; require employees to attest to	Research and establish standards of professional conduct and related performance measurements.	8/2020	••	

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		knowledge of and adherence to standards of conduct; develop systems to identify employee noncompliance with standards of conduct; and address noncompliance.	Train employees, document their commitment to the standards, measure compliance and follow up on noncompliance.			
46	Improve Department Compliance With Financial Disclosure Requirements	Department management ensure employees comply with Financial Disclosure requirements; develop policy and procedures to identify which staff the Commissioner should designate to file statements and ensure compliance; maintain applicable records; review prior actions involving ineligible staff and seek legal advice to determine the best method by which the Department can address actions tainted by the participation of ineligible members and staff. The Commissioner annually submit to the Secretary of State an organizational chart of all Department staff and advisory committee members required to file statements.	Seek guidance on financial disclosure requirements from Department of Justice.  Establish policy, procedure, and tracking based on Department of Justice guidance.	9/2019	....	
47	Improve External Communications	Department management improve external communication policies and procedures; ensure employees responsible for communications	Finalize and implement DES Customer Response guidance.  Establish DES Customer Service Committee.	12/2020	...	NHDES Customer Response Guidance finalized April, 2019, the wetlands bureau drafted Customer Response SOP under

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		are aware of and understand responsibilities; obtain customer feedback and ensure analysis is incorporated into strategic and workforce planning and process improvement efforts; obtain stakeholder feedback and input; ensure external performance reporting is timely, accurate, and provides relevant information; and evaluate the effectiveness and timeliness of external communications.	Finalize and activate customer service feedback survey. Establish schedule for reporting on and reviewing survey results.  Update permit dashboard to better track timeliness of permit-related communications.			review. 2 years of Customer Service feedback data has been analyzed. Customer Service survey being reviewed internally.  Permit dashboard is scheduled for update.
48	Ensure Public Information And Permitting Unit Practices Fully Comply With Statute	Department management ensure Public Information and Permitting Unit roles and responsibilities fully comply with statute or seek legislative changes to align statute with practice.	Evaluate Public Information and Permitting Unit roles and seek legislative changes to align statute with practice.	12/2020	••	Due to COVID-19 legislation has been suspended its session, these will be taken up when the legislature resumes.
49	Improve Compliance With External Reporting Requirements	Bureau management develop policy and procedures designed to ensure compliance with external reporting requirements; ensure external reports with specified content are submitted as required; consider seeking statutory changes to simplify reporting requirements; and ensure attached environmental councils have the necessary clerical and technical support.	Establish schedule with links to reporting requirements for all external reports, including schedule of managerial review of compliance with schedule.  Provide support to councils as requested by councils.	3/2021	••	

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50	Improve Internal Communications	Department management establish reporting lines between management and staff; communicate organizational and employee responsibilities and performance expectations; implement knowledge transfer processes; improve policies and procedures; ensure employees are aware of and understand their responsibilities; identify data and information for sufficient oversight at each management level; analyze data and information and integrate with planning efforts; and evaluate the effectiveness and timeliness of internal communications to make adjustments to communications strategies.	<p>Establish regular Division and LRM leadership meetings. Establish regular Bureau staff meetings.</p> <p>Communicate expectations through both meetings and emails.</p> <p>Implement use of computer-based knowledge management workbooks.</p> <p>Establish LRM performance expectations.</p>	9/2021	••	Holding regular Division leadership team and LRM leadership meetings. Wetlands Bureau supervisors hold regular meetings to assess workloads and improve communications. Weekly wetland bureau email communication updates planned to resume in June, 2020.
51	Improve Management Of Information Technology And Data Quality	Department management create a wetlands permitting data quality policy, train staff, and monitor compliance; evaluate to what extent Bureau information technology (IT) systems meet staff, management's, and, stakeholders' needs to understand performance; work with the Department of Information Technology to modify IT systems to allow for	<p>Develop wetlands permitting data quality policy, train staff, and monitor compliance.</p> <p>Enhance IT systems to assist with performance measurement.</p> <p>Assess cost-benefit of the enhancements.</p>	06/2021	•	All wetlands bureau staff participated in DES-wide data quality training. Data quality management and training is contingent on hiring of frozen Data Analyst position.

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		performance measurement and assessment of compliance; and ensure changes include cost-benefit analysis.				
52	Improve Paper Records Management	Department management develop recordkeeping requirements, policies, and procedures to ensure records contain documentation of the Department's functions, policies, and decisions, procedures; and ensure employees conform to requirements. Bureau management develop policy and procedure to track Bureau records and define the minimum standard content for completed applications; develop Bureau policy to ensure employees comply with requirements; and consider adopting policy requiring the ARC certify the completeness of each completed permit application file.	Update records retention plans and procedures.  Train employees and monitor compliance.	1/2021	•	The Commissioner's office has provided comments on the wetlands bureau draft SOPs on records management and records retention.
53	Assure Third-party Data Quality	Department management develop procedures to ensure reliable external data support all Bureau processes; promulgate rules incorporating data reviews; and inform applicants of reliability issues with data	Develop procedures to support use of reliable external data.  Develop and implement procedure for informing applicants of data reliability issues.	12/2021	•	NHDES has contracted to update statewide wetland mapping to provide reliable, independent data. GIS SOP is under review to ensure practices are standardized and

<b>Obs #</b>	<b>Observation Title</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Completion Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
		used during permitting processes.				sources of data are identified with supporting data maintenance plan.
<b>54</b>	Improve Wetlands Council Compliance With The Right-to-Know Law	Department management ensure the Council has the necessary clerical support to comply with the Right-to-Know law.	Provide Wetlands Council with the support they request.	5/2019	....	
<b>55</b>	Improve Wetlands Council External Reporting	Department management ensure the Council has the necessary clerical and technical support to meet its external reporting requirements.	Provide Wetlands Council with the support they request.	5/2019	....	
<b>56</b>	Improve Wetlands Council Compliance With financial Disclosure Requirements	Department management develop policy and procedures to ensure supported councils receive necessary administrative and clerical support to comply	Develop and implement procedures for administrative and clerical support of councils.	9/2019	....	
<b>57</b>	Improve Wetlands Council Compliance With The Administrative Procedure Act	Department management provide legal and technical support to coordinate and assist the Council with rulemaking to ensure the Council maintains ongoing compliance with statute.	Meet regularly, as needed, with Wetlands Council.  Provide Wetlands Council with the support they request.	5/2019	....	
<b>58</b>	Improve Consistency Of Environmental Councils' Rules	Department management provide all necessary support to assist the Environmental Councils with rulemaking to ensure consistency and compliance.	Provide Wetlands Council with the support they request.	5/2019	....	
<b>59</b>	Improve Wetlands Council Member Orientation	Department management ensure the Council has the necessary	Provide Wetlands Council with the support they request.	5/2019	....	

Obs #	Observation Title	Recommendation	Action Item	Due Date	Completion Status	Comments
		clerical and technical support to meet its requirement to provide orientation for members.				
60	Clarify Roles Of Staff Supporting The Wetlands Council	Department management ensure the Council has necessary clerical and technical support.	Provide Wetlands Council with the support they request.	5/2019	••••	