

A clear-span bridge is a structure that completely crosses a watercourse without altering the stream bed or bank. The bridge structure (including bridge approaches, abutments and footings) are built outside of the channel and above the high water mark such that no infilling of the stream channel occurs and stream flows are not constricted. A clear-span bridge is more preferred than a culvert as no structures are placed in the stream bed or banks and therefore there is no alteration of natural channel processes.

Clear-span bridge construction has the potential to negatively affect fish habitat by the removal of riparian vegetation. Riparian vegetation occurs adjacent to the watercourse and directly contributes to fish habitat by providing shade, cover and food production areas. It is important to retain as much riparian vegetation as possible at the crossing site to prevent erosion and minimize disturbance to fish habitat. Only the vegetation required to accommodate the footprint of the crossing and access to the construction site should be removed.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is responsible for protecting fish and fish habitat across Canada. Under Section 35 of the *Fisheries Act* no one may carry out a work or undertaking that will cause the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction (HADD) of fish habitat unless it has been authorized by DFO. By following the conditions and measures set out below you will be in compliance with Subsection 35(1) of the *Fisheries Act*.

The purpose of this Operational Statement is to describe measures to incorporate into the design and construction of small-scale, clear-span bridges in order to avoid negative impacts to fish habitat and maintain passage of fish. In this Operational Statement, a small-scale, clear-span bridge would be that required for a small road crossing (two lanes wide) that results in minimal disturbance to riparian vegetation. You may proceed with your clear-span bridge project without a DFO review when you meet the following conditions:

- ▶ the bridge is no greater than two lanes in width and does not encroach on the natural channel width by the placement of abutments, footings or rip-rap below the high water mark, and
- ▶ you incorporate the *Measures to Protect Fish and Fish Habitat when Constructing Clear-Span Bridges* listed below in this Operational Statement.

If you cannot meet all of the conditions listed above and cannot incorporate all of the measures listed below then your project may result in a violation of Subsection 35(1) of the *Fisheries Act* and you could be subject to enforcement action. In this case, you should contact a DFO office in your area if you wish to obtain DFO's opinion on the possible options you should consider to avoid contravention of the *Fisheries Act*.

You are required to respect all municipal, provincial, territorial or federal legislation (for example, the *Navigable Waters Protection Act*) that applies to the work being carried out in relation to this Operational Statement. If you have questions regarding this Operational Statement, please contact DFO by telephone at (418) 775-0726 or by email at [Habitat-qc@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:Habitat-qc@dfo-mpo.gc.ca).

**This Operational Statement applies to the province of Québec.**

We ask that you notify DFO, preferably 10 working days before starting your work by filling out and sending the attached notification form to: Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 850 route de la Mer, C.P. 1000, Mont-Joli, Québec, G5H 3Z4; Fax: (418) 775-0658. This information is requested in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the work carried out in relation to this Operational Statement.

## Measures to Protect Fish and Fish Habitat when Constructing Clear-Span Bridges

1. Avoid building on meander bends, braided streams, alluvial fans, active floodplains or any other area that is inherently unstable and may result in the erosion and scouring of the bridge structure.
2. The bridge structure is placed entirely above the high water mark of the watercourse and is not located in areas with eroding or unstable banks.
3. Design the bridge so that stormwater runoff from the bridge deck is directed into a retention pond or vegetated area to remove suspended solids, dissipate velocity and prevent sediment and other deleterious substances from entering the watercourse.
4. Generally there are no restrictions on timing for the construction of clear-span structures as they do not involve in-water work. However, if there are any activities with the potential to disrupt spawning fish and incubating eggs (e.g., crossing of watercourse by machinery), these should adhere to the following timing windows: between June 27 and September 1, unless it is clearly established that the work schedule will not interfere with the fish species life cycles.
5. Machinery crossing the watercourse (over and back) to bring equipment required for construction to the opposite side of the watercourse should be limited to a one-time event. If the stream bed and banks are highly erodible (e.g., dominated by organic materials and silts) and significant erosion and degradation is likely to occur as a result of equipment crossings, then a temporary crossing structure or other practices should be used to protect these areas. The crossing must also adhere to the timing window specified in Measure #4.
6. Install effective sediment and erosion control measures before starting work to prevent the entry of sediment into the watercourse. Inspect them regularly during the course of construction to ensure they are functioning properly. Make all necessary repairs if any damage is discovered.
7. Operate machinery on land (above the high water mark) and in a manner that minimizes disturbance to the banks of the watercourse.
  - 7.1. Machinery is to arrive on site in a clean condition and is to be maintained free of fluid leaks.
  - 7.2. Wash, refuel and service machinery and store fuel and other materials for the machinery away from the water to prevent any deleterious substance from entering the water.
  - 7.3. Keep emergency spill kit on site in case of fluid leaks or spills from machinery.
  - 7.4. Restore banks to original condition if any disturbance occurs.



8. While this Operational Statement does not apply to the clearing of riparian vegetation, the removal of select plants within the road right-of-way (ROW) may be required to meet operational and/or safety concerns for the crossing structure and the approaches. This removal within the road ROW should be kept to a minimum and when practicable, prune or top the vegetation instead of uprooting.
  - 8.1. Only the vegetation required to accommodate the footprint of the crossing and access to the construction site should be removed.
  - 8.2. Taper the clearing width of right-of-ways at water crossings and fell vegetation away from the water.
9. Use measures to prevent deleterious substances such as new concrete (i.e., it is pre-cast, cured and dried before use near the watercourse), grout, paint, ditch sediment and preservatives from entering the watercourse.
10. Stabilize any waste materials removed from the work site to prevent them from entering the watercourse. This could include covering stockpiles with biodegradable mats or tarps or planting stockpiles with grass or shrubs.
11. Vegetate any disturbed areas by planting and seeding preferably with native trees, shrubs or grasses and cover such areas with mulch to prevent soil erosion and to help seeds germinate. If there is insufficient time in the growing season remaining for the seeds to germinate, stabilize the site (e.g., cover exposed areas with erosion control blankets to keep the soil in place and prevent erosion) and then vegetate the following spring.

Aussi disponible en français.



# NOTIFICATION FORM

VERSION 2.0  
Valid until March 31, 2007

PROPONENT INFORMATION			
NAME:			
STREET ADDRESS:			
CITY/TOWN:		PROVINCE/TERRITORY:	POSTAL CODE:
TEL. NO. (RESIDENCE):		TEL. NO. (WORK):	
FAX NO:		EMAIL ADDRESS:	
CONTRACTOR INFORMATION (provide this information if a Contractor is working on behalf of the Proponent)			
NAME:			
STREET ADDRESS:			
CITY/TOWN:		PROVINCE/TERRITORY:	POSTAL CODE:
TEL. NO. (RESIDENCE):		TEL. NO. (WORK):	
FAX NO:		EMAIL ADDRESS:	
PROJECT INFORMATION			
Select Operational Statements that are being used (check all applicable boxes):			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aquatic Vegetation Removal	<input type="checkbox"/> Culvert Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance of Riparian Vegetation in Existing Rights-of-Way	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beach Creation	<input type="checkbox"/> Directional Drilling	<input type="checkbox"/> Moorings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beach Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Dock Construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Overhead Lines	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beaver Dam Removal	<input type="checkbox"/> Ice Bridges	<input type="checkbox"/> Punch and Bore Crossings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bridge Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Isolated Ponds	<input type="checkbox"/> Routine Maintenance Dredging	
<input type="checkbox"/> Clear-Span Bridges	<input type="checkbox"/> Log Salvage	<input type="checkbox"/> Underwater Cables	
Select the type of water body or watercourse at or near your project:			
<input type="checkbox"/> River, Stream, Creek	<input type="checkbox"/> Marine (Ocean or Sea)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Lake (8 hectares or greater)	<input type="checkbox"/> Estuary		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pond or wetland (pond is less than 8 hectares)			
PROJECT LOCATION (S) (fill out this section if the project location is different from Proponent Information; append multiple project locations on an additional sheet if necessary)			
Name of water body or watercourse		Coordinates of the Project (UTM co-ordinate or Degrees, Minutes, Seconds), if available	
		Easting: Latitude:	Northing: Longitude:
Legal Description (Plan, Block, Lot, Concession, Township, Section, Range)		Directions to Access the Project Site (i.e., Route or highway number, etc.)	
Proposed Start Date (YYYY/MM/DD):		Proposed Completion Date (YYYY/MM/DD):	

We ask that you notify DFO, preferably 10 working days before starting your work, by filling out and sending in, by mail or by fax, this notification form to: Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 850 Route de la Mer, P.O. Box 1000, Mont-Joli, Québec G5H 3Z4; Fax : (418) 775-0658. This information is requested in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the work carried out in relation to the Operational Statement.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name)  
certify that the information given on this form is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and complete.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Note:** If you cannot meet all of the conditions and cannot incorporate all of the measures in the Operational Statement then your project may result in a violation of Subsection 35(1) of the *Fisheries Act* and you could be subject to enforcement action. In this case, you should contact the DFO office in your area if you wish to obtain DFO's opinion on the possible options you should consider to avoid contravention of the *Fisheries Act*.

Information about the above-noted proposed work or undertaking is collected by DFO under the authority of the *Fisheries Act* for the purpose of administering the fish habitat protection provisions of the *Fisheries Act*. Personal information will be protected under the provisions of the *Privacy Act* and will be stored in the Personal Information Bank DFO-SCI-605. Under the *Privacy Act*, individuals have a right to, and on request shall be given access to, any personal information about them contained in a personal information bank. Instructions for obtaining personal information are contained in the Government of Canada's Info Source publications available at [www.infosource.gc.ca](http://www.infosource.gc.ca) or in Government of Canada offices. Information other than "personal" information may be accessible or protected as required by the provisions of the *Access to Information Act*.

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