



**US Army Corps
of Engineers -**
Mobile District

Request for Comments

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Mobile District

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PUBLIC NOTICE

**Evaluation of Web Interface Tools to Assist Stakeholders with the
Corps
Permit Process**

Mobile, AL – The Corps of Engineers is committed to helping stakeholders (citizens applying for permits, environmental consultants, developers, environmental groups, state and federal agency partners, etc.) understand the rules and procedures that shape the permit process. This can be a particularly daunting task for first time permit applicants and for those who have had no or limited interaction with the Corps regulatory program and are uncertain of how to proceed. The District is investigating the use of web interface tools to assist in educating stakeholders about the requirements and processes related to obtaining a Corps permit.

The Jacksonville District Regulatory Division recently launched an interactive training module on its web site (Jacksonville District web site link:

<http://www.sai.usace.army.mil/Divisions/Regulatory/trainingmodule/>) that is comprised of four activity-specific training videos and an avatar, a "virtual human" interface agent that provides spoken guidance. Through step-by-step instruction, the Jacksonville District hopes this teaching module will assist individuals with submittal of a complete permit application.

The Mobile District announces that it will open a thirty (30) day comment period to receive input as to the usefulness of implementing specific web tools, including avatar interface agents, video, online presentations and additional text materials, to assist in navigating the regulatory process.

The District will plan web site upgrades based on analysis of all the submitted information. Specifically, the District would like to receive feedback on what processes could benefit from additional web-based instruction or support. These include, but are not limited to:

- Help to complete a standard application for a permit.
- Help with the Corps - CAMA joint permitting process.
- Help with DWQ 401 certification process & Corps permitting
- Help determining which Nationwide or General Permit can be used for my project
- Help completing a PCN pre-construction notification form
- Explaining jurisdictional determination
- Explaining mitigation requirements and procedures
- Help with a FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) Request

- Explaining the public participation process for major projects

Additionally, there are a variety of web-based instructional tools that can be used to assist web visitors to learn about regulatory program activities. These include, but are not limited to:

- Instructional topic-specific video
- Instructional context specific help files for each form
- Interactive scenarios (using mixed media) of typical examples of regulatory activities
- Avatars (virtual human helper) to aid in step by step navigation of completing regulatory forms or processes
- Clearer site navigation or added navigational tools
- A discussion space for visitors to post questions and the Corps to post answers regarding aspects of the regulatory program
- Development of "Wiki's" or "podcasts" to help understand aspects of the program

The District will review comments on these or other suggested future web enhancements to improve understanding of the program and the requirements associated with the permit process until January 13, 2010.

Comments can be submitted in writing via email or mail to the address in the Notice heading or can be submitted via survey responses to the online survey link provided in this notice.

Web Site References:

Jacksonville District web site avatar:

<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Divisions/Regulatory/trainingmodule/>

Jacksonville District instructional videos:

<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Divisions/Regulatory/gallery.htm#videoRoadshow>

Jacksonville District regulatory sourcebook:

<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Divisions/Regulatory/sourcebook.htm>

Mobile District regulatory web site:

<http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/RD/reg/>