

# What You Need to Know About Building ponds and Clearing Land

## Site Selection

In order for you to have the best pond possible, there are a few very important items you will want to consider.

- Do you have the proper soil type for a pond?
- Is your watershed large enough, or is it too big?
- Will your pond serve its intended purpose when built: wildlife, aesthetics, livestock water, irrigation?
- Is the overall site suitable, location in relation to roads, etc.?
- Are there any restrictions to building a pond in the desired location?

If you are planning to clear land, contact USDA-NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) and the Orange Soil and Water Conservation District. We can help you make sure your activities meet all Federal, State and Local regulations and refer you to the appropriate agency.

## Rules and Regulations

There are many federal, state and local rules and regulations governing building a pond and clearing land. If you feel you have a suitable pond site, or you are planning to clear land, your need to contact the following agencies:

### **For Federal Permit Information Regarding Stream and Wetlands; 404 Permitting, and Agricultural Exemptions:**

Craig Brown  
(919) 554-4884 (ext. 35)  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Raleigh N.C. 27607

### **For State Permit Information Regarding Wetlands, Buffers, Stormwater Compliance, and Stream Permitting (401permits)**

Karen Higgins  
(919) 807-6300  
N.C. Division of Water Quality (Surface Waters and Wetlands standards)  
Raleigh N.C. 27699

### **For Dam Safety Information (for ponds: height of dam and acre feet of pond area is determining factor) Contact:**

John Holley, PE  
(919) 791-4200  
Land Quality  
Raleigh Regional Office

### **For Technical Assistance, Pond Assessments, and Agricultural Regulations (including Neuse River Basin Buffer Rules):**

(919) 245-2750 – Orange Soil and Water Conservation District  
(919) 644-1079 (ext. 3) – USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service  
306-D Revere Road  
Hillsborough N.C. 27278  
(Brent Bogue, Gail Hughes, Todd Roberts, Kenny Ray)

### **For Local Permits Information Regarding Land Clearing and Neuse River Basin Buffer Rules Contact:**

(919) 245-2587  
Wesley Poole with the Erosion Control Division  
Orange County Planning and Inspections Department.  
Hillsborough N. C. 27278

### **For Information relating to the USDA Benefits and Food Security Act and the production of commodity crops on newly cleared land:**

Tina Miller  
USDA Farm Service Agency  
(919) 732-4301 Ext. 2  
306-B Revere Road  
Hillsborough N.C. 27278

It is very important to **contact all of these agencies *Before*** beginning any work on a pond or clearing land. **While our staff may provide you with an estimate of surface area, dam height and water line, this does not constitute an engineering design.** Failure to follow federal, state and local regulations may result in fines and/or legal actions. In order to insure that your pond will be built properly and be maintained for years to come proper engineering design and installation procedures should be followed. Our staff can provide you with a list of contractors that perform the type of services needed.