

# SPECIAL PUBLIC NOTICE



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Kansas City District**

**DRAFT Great Plains Regional Supplement to the  
1987 Wetland Delineation Manual**

**Issue Date: September 21, 2006**

**Post Until: November 20, 2006**

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The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City District, announces the availability of the Draft Great Plains Regional Supplement to the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual (*Environmental Laboratory 1987*).

This draft regional supplement was developed by wetland delineation experts from state and Federal agencies and academia with experience within the region. It is being peer reviewed by an independent panel of scientists and practitioners (report is available upon request). This draft is also being field tested by interagency teams of state and Federal scientists to assess its clarity and ease of use, and to determine whether use of this supplement will result in any spatial changes in wetland jurisdiction for Clean Water Act Section 404 purposes. The draft is available at [http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/cecwo/reg/reg\\_supp.htm](http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/cecwo/reg/reg_supp.htm).

We are specifically seeking public input, including additional scientific information or data, on the proposed indicators of wetland hydrology, hydric soils, and hydrophytic vegetation and data collection procedures in this draft document. Commentors may wish to field test this supplement as part of their evaluation and comments. If so, the protocol for field testing must include the use of:

1. The 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual with current guidance (Environmental Laboratory. (1987). "Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual," Technical Report Y-87-1, U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, MS. <http://el.erdc.usace.army.mil/elpubs/pdf/wlman87.pdf>)
2. The 1987 Manual with this draft regional supplement on the same sampling points. A minimum of two points must be documented, one in the lower (wetland) community and one in the adjacent higher (upland) community. Commentors should include data recorded on both the current 1992 data forms and the proposed data forms from the Regional Supplement, maps indicating the location of the field site and data collection points (upland and wetland), and a completed questionnaire (see attached) for each delineation.

Comments may be submitted by the above due date to Ms. Katherine Trott (CECW-LRD), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 441 G. Street, NW, Washington DC 20314-1000 or by e-mail to [1987Manual@usace.army.mil](mailto:1987Manual@usace.army.mil). Another public notice will be issued by this district announcing the publication of the final document and the implementation date of this supplement.

**NOTICE TO EDITORS:** This notice is provided as background information for your use in formatting news stories. This notice is not a contract for classified display advertising.

Attachments

# Field Testing Protocol

## Great Plains Regional Supplement

### Organization of field testing teams:

District Offices of the Corps of Engineers in the Great Plains Region (see the list of District coordinators at the end of this document) will coordinate and oversee the field testing of the draft Great Plains Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual. Field testing will be done in cooperation with regional NRCS, EPA, FWS, and other interested federal and state agencies and universities.

Field teams will consist of available interagency wetland-delineation experts, with the constraint that each team must include an experienced botanist and a soil scientist to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the basic data.

If needed, the District coordinator will provide team members with an introduction to the Regional Supplement and will explain any new or unfamiliar indicators as necessary to avoid confusion over interpretation of the indicators.

### Site Selection:

Testing teams should focus on areas where permitting activity is high. There is no need to sample remote areas unless convenient opportunities arise.

Sample a number of "typical" wetland sites in each District or subregion, plus a selection of available "problem" situations. Problem situations should include, if possible, areas with unusual plant communities or soil types that may lack indicators, requiring use of Chapter 5 (Difficult Wetland Situations in the Great Plains) to make the wetland determination.

### Approach:

The basic testing approach is to document at least 2 sampling points at each field site, one point in the wetland and one point in the adjacent upland, and determine the location of the wetland boundary between them. The team should collaborate to make the determination and documentation as accurate as possible. Follow these general steps:

1. Document each sampling point based on existing practice (i.e., 1987 Manual *with existing guidance memos and existing local interpretation*). For each point, completely fill out the old (1992) wetland determination data form. Locate the wetland boundary based on current practice.
2. Document each point using the new (Regional Supplement) data form. Locate the wetland boundary based on indicators and guidance given in the Regional Supplement.
3. If the two wetland boundaries are different, measure the distance between them.

4. Fill out the attached questionnaire (one copy per field site) to help explain any differences seen in the two methods.
5. For each field site sampled, submit the following items to the appropriate District coordinator:
  - a. Completed 1992 and Regional Supplement data forms for each sampling point
  - b. Sketch map of the site with sampling points, wetland boundaries, and any other important features indicated
  - c. One copy of the Field Evaluation Questionnaire
  - d. Optional brief report as necessary to explain test results

List of Great Plains Corps District coordinators:

Andrew Commer, Tulsa District, 918-669-7616

Steven Eggers, St. Paul District, 651-290-5371

Mark Frazier, Kansas City District, 816-389-3664

Michael Gilbert, Omaha District, 402-221-3057

David Madden, Fort Worth District, 817-886-1741

Van Truan, Albuquerque District, Pueblo Regulatory Office, 719-543-6915

John Wong, Galveston District, Corpus Christie, 361-814-5847 Ext 126



**Assessment of the Indicators**

Hydrophytic Vegetation

1. Did the lower community pass the current basic test for hydrophytic vegetation (i.e., >50% of the dominants had an indicator status of FAC or wetter, *excluding FAC-*)?  Yes  No
2. Would the lower community have passed the dominance test if "+" and "-" modifiers on indicator status ratings were not considered (i.e., if FAC- were considered to be FAC)?

Yes  No

3. What other indicators of hydrophytic vegetation were observed in the lower community?

a) List those from the Manual with current guidance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b) List those from the Regional Supplement: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Was the vegetation in the lower community a problematic wetland community type?

Yes  No. *If so, briefly describe and explain how the problem was handled* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Did the upper community pass the current basic test for hydrophytic vegetation (i.e., >50% of the dominants had an indicator status of FAC or wetter, *excluding FAC-*)?  Yes  No

6. Would the upper community have passed the dominance test if "+" and "-" modifiers on indicator status ratings were not considered (i.e., if FAC- were considered to be FAC)?

Yes  No

7. What other indicators of hydrophytic vegetation were observed in the upper community?

a) List those from the Manual with current guidance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b) List those from the Regional Supplement: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Did both methods reach the same conclusion regarding the presence of hydrophytic vegetation for the upper community?  Yes  No. *If not, briefly explain* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Were the hydrophytic vegetation indicators in the Regional Supplement clearly described and easy to apply?  Yes  No. *If not, briefly explain* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Hydric Soil

1. Did both methods find indicators of hydric soil in the lower community?  Yes  No

a) List those from the Manual with current guidance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b) List those from the Regional Supplement: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Did the lower community contain a problematic hydric soil (i.e., one that lacked indicators)?

Yes  No. *If so, briefly describe the problem and explain how it was handled:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Did both methods reach the same conclusion regarding the presence of hydric soil in the upper community?  Yes  No. *If not, briefly explain* \_\_\_\_\_

a) List indicators from the Manual with current guidance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b) List indicators from the Regional Supplement: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Were the hydric soil indicators in the Regional Supplement clearly described and easy to apply?

Yes  No. *If not, briefly explain* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Wetland Hydrology

1. Did both methods determine that wetland hydrology was present in the lower community?

(Requires 1 primary indicator or 2 secondary indicators.)  Yes  No

a) List indicators from the Manual with current guidance:

Primary: \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b) List indicators from the Regional Supplement:

Primary: \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Did the lower community contain a problematic wetland hydrology situation (i.e., one that lacked indicators)?

Yes  No. *If so, briefly describe the problem and explain how it was handled:* \_\_\_\_\_

3. Did both methods reach the same conclusion regarding wetland hydrology for the upper community?

Yes  No. *If not, briefly explain* \_\_\_\_\_

a) List indicators from the Manual with current guidance:

Primary: \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary: \_\_\_\_\_

b) List indicators from the Regional Supplement:

Primary: \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Were the wetland hydrology indicators in the Regional Supplement clearly described and easy to apply?  Yes  No. *If not, briefly explain* \_\_\_\_\_

**General Comments on the Regional Supplement**

1. Were the indicators and procedures in the Supplement clear and easy to apply?

Yes  No. *If not, how could they be improved?* \_\_\_\_\_

2. In your opinion, did the Regional Supplement make this wetland determination more defensible?

Yes  No. *Briefly explain* \_\_\_\_\_

3. Based on your testing, do you want to recommend other indicators that should be considered for further evaluation?  Yes  No. *List by indicator type:* \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Was the Regional Supplement's field data form complete, understandable, and easy to fill out?  Yes  No. *If not, how could it be improved?* \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Any additional comments or suggestions? \_\_\_\_\_

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