



## Funding Wetland Projects

# Wetland Program Development Grants

### Developing Wetland Monitoring Programs and Improving Compensatory Mitigation

*Wetlands are an essential part of our landscape. They provide numerous benefits that include rich floral and faunal habitat, improved water quality, flood abatement, water storage and groundwater recharge, support of fisheries, and opportunities for education and recreation. Given these benefits, many communities are exploring how to best protect their existing wetland resources and restore the thousands of acres that have been lost or impaired.*

*In addition to its federal regulatory role in protecting wetlands, EPA works with partners to develop state, tribal, and local wetland protection and restoration programs. Initiated in 1990, EPA's Wetland Program Development Grants (WPDG) provide \$15 million annually to state, tribal, and local governments. EPA funds more than 100 innovative wetland program projects every year.*



#### Eligible Applicants

States, tribes, and local governments, and national non-profit, non-governmental organizations.

#### Eligible Projects

Development and enhancement of new or existing wetland protection, management, and restoration programs.

#### Restrictions

1. Grant funds cannot be used for operational support of wetlands programs.

2. To use WPDG dollars for field work, the application must illustrate a clear, demonstrable link to program development.

3. Grant dollars cannot be used to fund land acquisition or purchase of easements, but can support planning efforts to identify areas for acquisition.

#### Web Site

[www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands](http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands)

#### FY2002 Funding Priorities

Although WPDGs can be used by state, tribal, and local governments to build and refine all elements of a comprehensive wetland program, the national wetland program identifies program priorities every fiscal year. For FY02, the three priorities are:

1. Developing a comprehensive monitoring and assessment program.
2. Improving the effectiveness of compensatory mitigation.
3. Refining the protection of vulnerable wetlands and aquatic resources.

Hence, funding priority will be given to projects that address these three areas.

#### Sample proposals for wetland monitoring and assessment:

1. Identify state's or tribe's training needs for developing a wetland monitoring program and conducting training such as:
  - a. Introduction to wetlands biological monitoring and assessment and to the hydrogeomorphic approach.
  - b. Wetland inventory and GIS.
  - c. Developing assemblages: attributes, variables and field indicators, field sampling, field data acquisition.
2. Establish a state/tribal interagency workgroup to develop a wetland monitoring program and participate in or lead a regional wetland monitoring workgroup.
3. Conduct preliminary field work to:
  - a. Fine-tune methods and protocols for setting priorities and approaches for monitoring wetlands, e.g., by wetland type, degree of threat, or rotating basin.
  - b. Develop protocols for monitoring programs, e.g., sampling protocol, monitoring method, data management. (See Restriction 2 at left)
4. Implement a wetland monitoring strategy and report wetland quality data in the 305(b) report. (See Restriction 1 at left)



### Sample proposals for compensatory mitigation:

1. Develop or improve success criteria for monitoring compensatory mitigation projects.
2. Develop or enhance compensatory mitigation tracking data bases.
3. Identify reference wetlands for compensatory mitigation monitoring.
4. Perform landscape-level evaluations to identify and inventory the most appropriate locations for compensatory mitigation projects.
5. Perform cumulative impact assessments to identify opportunities to use compensatory mitigation projects to help offset past losses of particular wetland types.

### Sample proposals for vulnerable wetlands and aquatic resources:

1. Develop or strengthen a comprehensive state wetland statute with protection for waters unregulated by federal law.
2. Amend state water quality regulation to better protect wetlands.
3. Develop or augment conservation easement and land acquisition programs. (See Restriction 3)
4. Develop an education and outreach project to increase voluntary actions that protect these aquatic resources.
5. Enhance mapping of isolated wetlands and aquatic resources.

Dave Davis



Wetland Program Development Grants can be used for a variety of projects, including monitoring and assessment.

### The Wetland Fact Sheet Series



Wetlands Overview

Types of Wetlands

Functions & Values of Wetlands

Threats to Wetlands

Wetland Restoration

Funding Wetland Projects

Wetland Monitoring & Assessment

Sustainable Communities

Volunteering for Wetlands

Teaching about Wetlands

For more information, visit [www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands](http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands).

## EPA Grant Coordinators

Contact your regional grant coordinator for more information.

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