



DELINEATION STANDARDS
Regulatory Branch Chicago District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Some Reminders when submitting wetland delineations to the District for review:

REGARDING FIELDWORK:

- Reference appropriate Supplements to the Corps of Engineers Delineation Manual when conducting delineation fieldwork. In Chicago District territory, either the Midwest Supplement or the Northcentral and Northeast Supplement will be used. Determine which Supplement should be used prior to conducting fieldwork. Both can be found here:
http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks/RegulatoryProgramandPermits/reg_supp.aspx
- Use appropriate Supplement data sheets.
 - Midwest Supplement:
 - <http://www.lrc.usace.army.mil/Portals/36/docs/regulatory/forms/midwestform.xls>
 - <http://www.lrc.usace.army.mil/Portals/36/docs/regulatory/forms/midwestform.pdf>
 - Northcentral and Northeast Supplement:
 - <http://www.lrc.usace.army.mil/Portals/36/docs/regulatory/forms/northceform.xls>
 - <http://www.lrc.usace.army.mil/Portals/36/docs/regulatory/forms/northceform.pdf>
- Take data points in suspect areas in order to demonstrate their upland/wetland status. A suspect area is an area that is mapped as a wetland or an area that exhibits wetland vegetation, hydric soils, and/or wetland hydrology or a combination thereof. Do not conclude an area is upland without documenting it with a data point.
- Use newer Soil Color Chart (Munsell currently recommends replacing Soil Color Chart every two years) to color soils. Color chips can fade and lead to incorrect interpretation of soil.
- Use 'wetland delineation' print day glo pink (or day glo orange) flagging or 'wetland delineation' print pin flags to identify wetland boundary. Do not use plain flagging or plain pin flags as surveyors and utilities also use these.
- 'Wetland delineation' pin flags or 'wetland delineation' flagging tied to wood lathe should be used when possible.
- When it is necessary to tie/hang 'wetland delineation' flagging, tie it on woody vegetation or permanent structure and not on herbaceous vegetation.
- Wetland boundary flags should be spaced so that no waters of the US, including wetlands, are omitted between flags.
- The limits of waterways and drainages must be flagged. If wetlands exist outside of the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) of the waterway or drainage, flag the waterway/drainage and abutting wetland as one area, do not flag them as separate areas.
- We strongly encourage completion of a wetland delineation course based on the 1987 Corps Wetland Delineation Manual for anyone putting their names as Investigators on data sheets. In addition, we strongly encourage anyone conducting delineation work within our boundaries to have completed training on the Midwest and Northcentral and Northeast Supplements.
- Conducting delineation work with an experienced delineator prior to conducting solo delineation work is strongly encouraged.
- When digging soil pits, we strongly recommend the use of tile spades/Sharpshooters versus the use of soil augers and/or soil probes. Use of soil augers and/or soil probes can alter the soil profile and therefore alter soil data.

- We strongly recommend that wetland boundary surveys are prepared by a Professional Land Surveyor (P.L.S.) in Illinois, or by a P.L.S. or P.E. in Indiana, regardless the stage of the project.
- We require that wetland boundary surveys are prepared by a P.L.S. (or P.E. in Indiana) on all projects going to permitting.
- Delineation fieldwork should occur within growing season.

REGARDING REPORTS:

- Fill out appropriate data sheets in their entirety.
- Spell out names of Investigators on data sheets.
- Reports should contain the following figures at minimum: location map, US Geological Survey (USGS), National Wetlands Inventory (NWI), soil survey, recent (representative of current land use) aerial photograph showing locations of data points, and delineation figure (if areas were delineated) consisting of aerial photograph with delineation boundary overlay and/or Plat of Topography/Topographic Map with delineation boundary overlay.
- Put road names and directional arrows on report figures for ease of use during field reviews.
- Labels and acreages for each delineated area should be included on the delineation figure and in the report.
- Provide latitude/longitude in decimal degrees for each delineated area.
- According to our current Regional Permit Program (RPP), delineations should include: information about adjacent areas (off-site wetlands, etc.), a Floristic Quality Assessment (FQA), and a wildlife list.
- Include description of general site conditions as well as descriptions for delineated areas.
- If you believe there are isolated wetlands on-site and/or wetlands that fall under significant nexus, include report and figures on a CD along with the hard copy of report and figures.

Following these standards will help to expedite our review of delineation work. Flexibility of these standards may be determined by the District on a case-by-case basis only. Please remember the Corps has the ability to reject delineation work that is: incomplete, inaccurate and/or conducted outside of the growing season.

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