Mitigation Newsletter
Wisconsin and Minnesota

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Protection Agency
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources

2025 Interagency Review Team Listening Sessions for Wisconsin and Minnesota

The Interagency Review Teams (IRT) for Minnesota and Wisconsin hosted a series of listening sessions in 2025 to provide opportunities for stakeholders in the mitigation community to offer suggestions to improve our mitigation bank and in-lieu fee processes and procedures as well as to answer questions about our mitigation programs. The IRT and state agencies would like to extend their thanks and appreciation for all who attended and provided comments and recommendations. The IRT will use the recommendations to improve our interagency review process and inform our communication strategies, training opportunities, and future standard operating procedure topics. An after-action report describing the participant feedback received, agency evaluation of the feedback, and specific joint-agency actions to address feedback is available at the link above. Please note, this effort is separate from BWSR rulemaking initiatives and stakeholders can find information on that process on BWSR's website.

Release of the Wisconsin Guidelines Version 2

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District Regulatory Division (Corps) and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (Wisconsin DNR) announced the official release of the Wisconsin Guidelines, Version 2 (Wisconsin Guidelines) on June 12, 2025. The agencies have developed the Wisconsin Guidelines as two documents, one tailored for sponsors titled Procedures for Developing Wetland Compensatory Mitigation Sites in Wisconsin and the second for applicants/permittees titled Procedures for Project Proponents on Compensatory Mitigation Requirements in Wisconsin. The announcement of the official release and a copy of the Wisconsin Guidelines can be found here.

Minnesota Guidelines Update

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District (Corps) expects to issue a public notice announcing a draft of the Minnesota Guidelines, Version 2 this summer. The Corps is drafting two documents, one tailored for sponsors titled Procedures for Developing Wetland Compensatory Mitigation Sites in Minnesota and the second for applicants/permittees titled Procedures for Project Proponents on Compensatory Mitigation Requirements in Minnesota.

The Corps will solicit public feedback on these documents during the public notice period. We will also host a listening session to answer questions and collect feedback verbally. If you are on the Corps' email distribution list for mitigation-related announcements, you will receive an invitation from Marissa Merriman once we schedule the listening session. If you are not currently on the email distribution list, please contact Marissa Merriman at marissa.v.merriman@usace.army.mil and we will add you.

Submitting Complete Prospectus and Draft Mitigation Banking Instruments for Corps/IRT Review

Upon receipt of a Prospectus or Draft Mitigation Banking Instrument (DMBI), the Corps has 30 days to determine whether or not the submittal is complete. The requirements for submitting a complete Prospectus and DMBI can be found at the following links. Complete Prospectus Checklist and Complete Mitigation Plan. A complete Prospectus or DMBI is required in order for the IRT to start the review process for either document. The most common missing items from prospectuses received for review include the site selection checklist and adjacent property owner contact information. Some of the items most commonly missed with DMBI submittals include a completed MBI document (MN MBI Template, WI MBI Template), failure to address comments required to be addressed by the previous Corps review letter and missing long-term and adaptive management plans. Please carefully reference the checklists linked above and the most recent Corps bank review letter (if applicable) to ensure submittal of complete prospectus and DMBIs to avoid delayed initiation of agency review. Please note: The MBI template is not part of the state of Minnesota's bank review/approval process.

Sponsor Qualifications

Prospective bank sponsors who do not have experience managing or monitoring a compensatory mitigation bank generally hire qualified consultants to assist in the development of bank plans. It is equally important that sponsors utilize qualified professionals to assist with construction, management and monitoring of banks. Working with qualified professional can help sponsors ensure that any construction activities are completed according to the approved plan and that the documentation required for as-built certification is obtained. Failure to properly construct, document, manage and monitor your bank site can lead to delayed or denied credit releases.

BWSR Wetland Mitigation Fee Policy Update

BWSR is in the process of updating the wetland mitigation fees in accordance with board policy. Revised fee amounts will be based on updated Department of Revenue (DOR) land valuation data and recorded credit sales price to reflect current conditions. Concurrently, staff are reviewing existing policy for potential revisions to ensure it remains accurate and transparent. Minor revisions to policy language will be considered to improve clarity and support more efficient administration.

BWSR Rulemaking Update

BWSR is continuing its work to update the state Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) rules. A third preliminary draft of the rule (MN Rule Chapter 8420), dated 2/2/26, is posted on the WCA rulemaking page of the BWSR website. The final draft rule will be developed in coordination with the MN Revisor's Office, after which it will be considered by the BWSR board for publication in the State Register as the next step in the rule adoption process under the Minnesota Administrative Procedures Act. Additional opportunities for review and comment will be provided through that process, prior to final adoption of the rule. For additional information about WCA rulemaking, see past issues of this newsletter or the WCA rulemaking page of the BWSR website at: https://bwsr.state.mn.us/wca-rulemaking

APT Version 3.0

Version 3.0 of the Antecedent Precipitation Tool (APT) is now available. The APT is an automation tool that the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) developed to facilitate the comparison of antecedent or recent precipitation conditions for a given location to the range of normal precipitation conditions that occurred during the preceding 30 years. The latest update to the APT expands upon previous functionality by incorporating streamflow data alongside precipitation analysis, providing a more comprehensive description of hydrologic and climatic conditions across the United States and its territories. Driven by research conducted by the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC), APT v3.0 leverages streamflow data from the USGS and the National Water Model, delivering results in formats such as KMZ and PDF for streamlined visualization and reporting.

The APT may be used to accelerate USACE decision-making by automating and augmenting the requirement of the Regional Supplements to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual (Regional Supplements) when evaluating precipitation and other climatic variables associated with 1) difficult wetland situations (see Chapter 5 of the Regional Supplements) or 2) the assessment of certain wetland hydrology indicators (e.g., saturation or inundation visible on aerial imagery or dry-season water table). The APT also has utility in evaluating precipitation normalcy for assessing baseline or historic conditions on proposed bank sites, hydrology monitoring data, or when collecting, observing, or evaluating streamflow duration information or data.

USACE is also announcing the release of a new user guide for APT v3.0. This USACE Wetlands Regulatory Assistance Program (WRAP) publication serves as both a user guide and the technical documentation for the APT, including its inputs, outputs, analyses, common errors, and troubleshooting tips.

Download the APT 3.0 User Guide

Download the APT (Version 3.0.8)

Tips for Well Installation for Wetland Hydrology Monitoring .

- Data loggers: depends on the logger, but batteries need to be replaced at least once every couple of years.
- Data loggers can run out of battery during the growing season – keep the batteries fresh and check them periodically early in the growing to avoid this.
- When installing the well, it is wise to write the well measurements on the riser in permanent marker.
- Depends on soils, but in mineral soils wells are typically installed using an auger. A bucket auger should be used in sandy soils to prevent collapse within the bore hole. Wells installed in organic soils can often be driven in. See ERDC 2005 guidance for difference between augured well and driven well construction. It is key to scarify the sides of the bore hole in loamy/clayey soils before well installation to counteract any smearing caused by the auger that would slow or prevent groundwater flow to the well.
- Aim to install the well to depth of 3 feet from ground surface when purpose of well is to monitor progress of wetland restoration. Exceptions: If restrictive layer present do not penetrate restrictive layer. If organic soils overlaying sand present, do not install well beyond the organic layer. Doing so will essentially create an injection well and will obfuscate well data.
- Data loggers should be removed at the end of the growing season before freezing temperatures set in.
- Use electrical tape to secure the cable around the top of the riser . Check the data logger cable for fraying and replace to prevent the cable from breaking.
- Frost heave and other elements can shift or misalign the well – recheck well measurements 1-2x per growing season and recalibrate the well if necessary.
- Mark wells with posts or other highly visible markings to prevent them from accidentally being mowed over.
- Use a bailer to check for water in the well to confirm it is functioning properly.
- Always record the soil profile for each well location – use the ERDC 2005 well log form or similar.

ERDC TN-WRAP-05-2
June 2005

APPENDIX B. MONITORING WELL INSTALLATION DATA FORM

Monitoring Well Installation Data Form

Project Name _____ Date of Installation _____
Project Location _____ Personnel _____
Well Identification Code _____

Attach map of project, showing well locations and significant topographic and hydrologic features.

Characteristics of Instrument:
Source of instrument/well stock _____
Material of well stock _____ Diameter of pipe _____
Slot width _____ Slot spacing _____
Kind of well cap _____ Kind of well point/end plug _____
Installation:

Was well installed by augering or driving? _____
Kind of filter sand _____ Kind of bentonite _____
Depth to lowest screen slots _____ Riser height above ground _____

Was bentonite wetted for expansion? _____
Method of measuring water levels in instrument _____
How was instrument checked for clogging after installation? _____

Instrument Diagram[a]	Soil Characteristics					
	Texture	Matrix Color	Redoximorphic Features		Induration (none, weak, strong)	Roots
			Color	Abundance		

[a]Show depths (heights) of riser, well screen, sand pack, and bentonite in relation to soil horizons.