



# U.S. Army Corps of Engineers , St. Paul District Wetland & Water Permit Information

*This informational guide is intended to provide general information about federal regulations regarding wetlands and waters and how to contact the Corps of Engineers regulatory personnel at the St. Paul District.*

## What is a wetland?

Wetlands are areas of the landscape where water is present at or near the surface for sufficient periods during the growing season such that the plants present in these areas are adapted to life in wet conditions. Wetlands such as swamps and marshes are often obvious, but some wetlands are not easily recognized because they are dry during part of the year or have saturated soil but no surface water.

## Wetland types:

There are many types of wetlands within the states of Minnesota and Wisconsin. These wetland types vary greatly in vegetation communities, soils and hydrology. The photographs on the back of this page show examples of wetland types.

## Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

authorizes the Corps to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill material into “waters of the United States.” “Waters of the United States” include navigable waters, their tributaries and most wetlands. A permit may be required for discharges including, but not limited to, placement of fill material; excavation, when the excavated material is sidecast into a water of the U.S.; levee and dike construction; land grading/leveling; road construction; and the placement of riprap.

## Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of

1899 requires a permit for structures and/or work in or affecting navigable waters of the United States. Activities for which permits may be required, but are not limited to: placement/removal of structures such as docks or pilings, work involving dredging or disposal of material, aerial cables, directional boring, sea walls and riprap. A list of navigable waters of the United States can be found at:

[www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory](http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory).

## Obtaining a Corps permit:

Joint local, state and federal applications for wetland and water projects are available at:

[www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory](http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory) in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Corps staff is available free of charge to assist landowners in completing the application, answer general questions regarding the permit process, to determine whether a project would require a federal permit or to determine if wetlands are present at a project location. You can contact a Corps representative toll free by leaving a message at (800) 290-5847, Ext. 5525, or by visiting us at: [www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory](http://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/regulatory).

## Types of permits:

The Corps of Engineers has various permit types designed to apply the appropriate level of review for a wide range of projects. Your project may qualify for a General Permit, or GP; Letter of Permission, or LOP; Nationwide Permit, or NWP; or Individual Permit, or IP; depending on the type and amount of impact proposed. A project may also qualify for an exemption as specified in the regulations. The Corps of Engineers will apply the appropriate review process whenever an application is received.

## Wetland functions, benefits and values:

Wetlands provide many important functions. One of the primary functions of wetlands is to store water and slowly release it over time. This reduces the effects of flooding. They also act as filters retaining sediments and nutrients, resulting in healthier streams and lakes. Wetlands provide wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities, such as hunting, fishing and trapping. The functions and the degree to which a wetland provides these functions depends on wetland type, size, landscape position and level of disturbance. Although a wetland may not serve all functions, each wetland works in combination with other wetlands or streams as part of a complex integrated system. Because of the importance of these functions, federal regulations require permittees to avoid, minimize and mitigate for adverse impacts to these resources.

# Types of Wetlands



**Seasonally Flooded Basins**



**Coniferous Bog**



**Open Bog**



**Calcareous Fens**



**Floodplain Forests**



**Deep Marshes**



**Shallow Marshes**



**Shallow, Open Marshes**



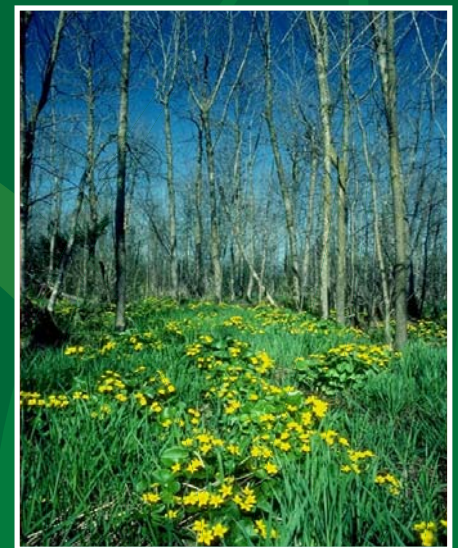
**Fresh (Wet) Meadows**



**Sedge Meadows**



**Wet-to-Wet-Mesic Prairies**



**Hardwood Swamp**



**Coniferous Swamp**



**Shrub-Carr and Alder Thickets**