



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, MOBILE**  
**CORPS OF ENGINEERS**  
**P.O. BOX 2288**  
**MOBILE, ALABAMA 36628-0001**

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SPECIAL PUBLIC NOTICE

September 1, 2010

**SPECIAL PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

**ONE-YEAR TRIAL IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD OF THE EASTERN MOUNTAINS  
& PIEDMONT INTERIM REGIONAL SUPPLEMENT**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, announces the publication and one-year trial implementation period of the Eastern Mountains & Piedmont Interim Regional Supplement (supplement) to the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual (1987 Manual). This supplement was developed by wetland delineation experts from state and Federal agencies and academia with experience within this part of the country. It has been peer reviewed by an independent panel of scientists and practitioners and made available for 90-day public comment period. This interim document will be tested for one year prior to finalization; the one year period will be effective 30 days from the date of this public notice. The supplement will be field tested by interagency teams of state and Federal scientists to assess its clarity and ease of use, and to determine whether its use will result in any spatial changes in wetland delineation for Clean Water Act purposes. Comments on this supplement should be submitted to Karen Mulligan (CECW-CO), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 441 G Street, NW, Washington DC 20314-1000 or by email to [1987Manual@usace.army.mil](mailto:1987Manual@usace.army.mil)

The 1987 Manual, this supplement, including data forms, as well as the independent peer review report and response document, the environmental assessment/FONSI prepared under NEPA, and copies of public comments are available on the Regulatory Homepage Website at [http://www.usace.army.mil/CECW/Pages/reg\\_supp.aspx](http://www.usace.army.mil/CECW/Pages/reg_supp.aspx). The testing protocol and questionnaire are attached to this public notice.

The following guidance is superseded by this Supplement, and is hereby rescinded by this public notice:

“Implementation of the 1987 Corps Wetland Delineation Manual,” memorandum from John P. Elmore dated 27 August 1991.

“Questions & Answers on the 1987 Manual,” memorandum from John F. Studt dated 7 October 1991.

“Clarification and Interpretation of the 1987 Manual,” memorandum from Major General Arthur E. Williams dated 6 March 1992.

“Revisions to National Plant Lists,” memorandum from Michael L. Davis dated 17 January 1996.

“NRCS Field Indicators of Hydric Soils,” memorandum from John F. Studt dated 21 March 1997.

Region and subregion boundaries are depicted in these documents as sharp lines. However, climatic conditions and the physical and biological characteristics of landscapes do not change abruptly at the boundaries. In reality, regions and subregions often grade into one another in broad transition zones that may be tens or hundreds of miles wide. The lists of wetland indicators presented in these regional supplements may differ between adjoining regions or subregions. In transitional areas, investigators must use experience and good judgment to select the supplement and indicators that are appropriate to the site based on its physical and biological characteristics. Wetland boundaries are not likely to differ between two supplements in transitional areas, but one supplement may provide more detailed treatment of certain problem situations encountered on the site. If in doubt about which supplement to use in a transitional area, apply both supplements and compare the results. For additional guidance, contact the appropriate Corps of Engineers District Regulatory Office. Contact information for District regulatory offices is available at the Corps Headquarters web site [http://www.usace.army.mil/CECW/Pages/cecwo\\_reg.aspx](http://www.usace.army.mil/CECW/Pages/cecwo_reg.aspx)

Effective 30 days from the date of this public notice, the supplement data forms and indicators must be used for any data collection for wetland delineations. Field data collected for wetland delineations using the 1987 Manual prior to the effective date of this notice, but not yet submitted to the appropriate Corps District for review and formal approval will be grandfathered. Documentation must be submitted to the appropriate Corps District which clearly shows the field data was collected prior to 30 days from the date of this notice in order to qualify for this grandfather provision. Once this documentation and the field data have been reviewed and approved by the appropriate Corps District, a written jurisdictional determination will be issued.

While we are confident the supplement will improve the accuracy of wetland delineation in the Eastern Mountains & Piedmont, anyone performing a wetland delineation during this interim period using the supplement who believes it has resulted in a significantly different boundary line than the 1987 Manual may also complete the delineation using the 1987 Manual and submit both delineations. Enough points to adequately describe the representative plant communities, soils, and hydrology of the site(s) and to clearly document the difference in boundaries between the two methods must be included. Data recorded on both the existing 1992 data forms and the new supplement data forms, maps indicating the location of the field site and data collection points (upland and wetland), and a completed field evaluation questionnaire for each delineation must be submitted as part of the jurisdictional determination request to the appropriate Corps District Office. The District will make the final determination based on analysis of all the submitted information. This information will also be used in evaluation and potential modification of the supplement.

Attachment (Field Evaluation Questionnaire)

## WETLAND DELINEATION FIELD EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire should be completed for each boundary delineation performed. The assumption is that two communities were evaluated, one wetland (= "lower community") and one upland (= "upper community") so that a boundary between them could be identified. Fill in the blanks or check spaces as appropriate. Attach copies of the completed field data forms.

**Site Name or Location** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Evaluator(s)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Affiliation(s)** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### General Site Characteristics

Is the site \_\_\_ typical or \_\_\_ problematic? *If problematic, explain:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Wetland (lower community)

Ecological System: \_\_\_ Saline Tidal \_\_\_ Fresh Tidal \_\_\_ Fresh Nontidal \_\_\_ Saline Nontidal  
Wetland Type: \_\_\_ Forested \_\_\_ Shrub \_\_\_ Emergent \_\_\_ Moss/Lichen \_\_\_ Farmed (hay or crop)  
\_\_\_ Other (specify \_\_\_\_\_)  
HGM Class: \_\_\_ Depression \_\_\_ Riverine \_\_\_ Fringe \_\_\_ Slope \_\_\_ Flat  
Vegetative Cover: \_\_\_ Dense \_\_\_ Evenly Mixed w/Nonvegetated \_\_\_ Sparse

#### Nonwetland (upper community)

Habitat Type: \_\_\_ Forest \_\_\_ Shrub \_\_\_ Meadow/Prairie \_\_\_ Moss/Lichen \_\_\_ Farmed  
\_\_\_ Other (specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

1. Was there a marked difference in the two plant communities? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
2. Was there a gradual change in vegetation between the two communities creating a significant "transition zone" between? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No. If so, how wide was this transition zone? \_\_\_\_\_ feet
3. Was there an abrupt topographic change between the two communities? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

### Boundary Determination

*Compare results from the two methods: (1) current practice using the 1987 Manual and guidance memos, and (2) 1987 Manual with the draft Regional Supplement.*

1. The wetland boundary was: \_\_\_ the same or \_\_\_ different.
2. If different, which method produced the boundary higher on the landscape?  
\_\_\_ Manual with current guidance or \_\_\_ Manual with Regional Supplement
3. What was the linear distance between the two boundaries? \_\_\_\_\_ feet
4. What type of indicator(s) were responsible for the difference in the boundaries?  
\_\_\_ Hydrophytic vegetation \_\_\_ Hydric soil \_\_\_ Wetland hydrology (*check all that apply*)

## 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. Did the lower community pass the “dominance test” in the Regional Supplement (i.e., >50% of the dominants were FAC or wetter, *counting FAC- as 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. Did the upper community pass the “dominance test” in the Regional Supplement (i.e., >50% of the dominants were FAC or wetter, *counting FAC- as 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* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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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