



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

CECW-OR

JUL 17 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND DISTRICT  
COMMANDS

SUBJECT: 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual

1. This memorandum is being issued to clarify the ability of districts and divisions to use local scientific and technical information to supplement the 1987 Corps wetland delineation manual. As you are probably aware, Corps HQ has initiated an effort with ERDC to update and clarify the manual nationwide. These clarifications and updates will be based on the current state of wetland science. This effort does not change the procedures in the 1987 manual nor does it change the requirement for making a determination of what is a wetland (the three parameter test) under the manual.
2. Dr. Jim Wakeley of ERDC will be directing this effort. We at HQ have contacted the Districts to designate specific project managers to help identify problem areas. These PMs will be asked to provide initial information, review drafts, identify and coordinate site visits and identify local scientific information (e.g., academic studies, agency technical groups). This will ensure that we can address as many of the technical field problems as we can.
3. In the meantime, there are a number of Districts in the country which have ongoing problems not addressed by the manual. If there are scientific data and studies that can be used to clarify wetland delineations, Districts should submit these data or studies to Headquarters through the MSCs for consistency review before use. In addition, once Headquarters has approved the use of these data or studies for use, the Districts must prepare and publish a Public Notice outlining the proposed change, providing a schedule when these changes would take effect, and requesting comments. A final Public Notice announcing the effective date of these changes should be published along with a summary of the comments and responses. One issue that should be addressed in the Public Notice is that the manual allows for regional differences.

In addition, the manual allows for continuous updating of scientific information. For example, as new plant lists are finalized by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and new soils manual are published by Natural Resources Conservation Service, Districts should utilize the latest information. This information can be used once a District has put out a public notice indicating the effective date for implementation.

4. Letters will be sent from HQ to the other agencies (FWS, NRCS, EPA) to request their assistance with this effort.
5. We know that this effort is long overdue; however, now that it has been initiated we will make a concerted effort to produce timely documents that answer as many questions as possible at this time and allow flexibility to continue to incorporate new information into our wetland delineations.
6. Any questions regarding this guidance may be directed to Katherine Trott at (202) 761-4617.

FOR THE COMMANDER

*for Laurence A. Long*  
MICHAEL B. WHITE  
Chief, Operations Division  
Directorate of Civil Works