

# EPA's Enhancing State and Tribal Program (ESTP)

What is a Wetland Program  
Plan (WPP)

&

Helpful tips for developing  
WPPs



# **Wetland Program Plans (WPPs):**

## **A Primer**



# Background: EPA's Core Elements Framework (CEF)

- ❖ At the state and tribal level, wetland programs are found in many different agencies pursuing a range of goals that differ according to their specific priorities and the wide range of wetland types and functions in their jurisdiction.
- ❖ While each state and tribe has their own wetland goals, there is a common set of program objectives that EPA believes comprise a comprehensive wetland program.
- ❖ So in 2009 EPA summarized these common objectives in the Core Elements of Effective State and Tribal Wetlands Programs, also called the Core Elements Framework (CEF).



# EPA's Core Elements Framework (CEF)

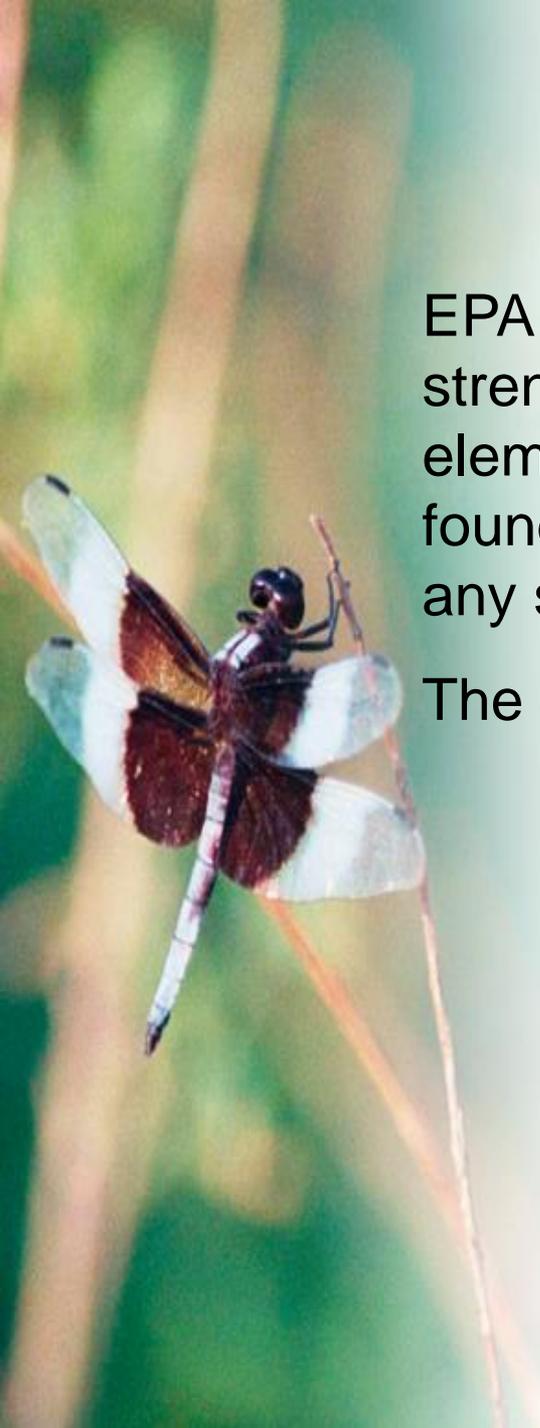
- ❖ The CEF outlines the core elements of a S/T wetland program, describes each Core Element, and provides a comprehensive menu of program-building activities for each Core Element.
- ❖ Using the CEF, S/Ts can design their own roadmap towards development of a more comprehensive wetland program. States and tribes can implement the CEF depending on their individual program goals and available resources.
- ❖ The CEF also encourages S/Ts to pursue a strategic approach to their wetland program development through development of Wetland Program Plans (WPPs)

# So what are the Core Elements?

EPA identifies 4 core elements that comprise and strengthen effective wetlands programs. These core elements are basic program functions that form the foundation of wetlands management and protection in any state or tribe program.

The 4 Core Elements are:

1. Monitoring and Assessment;
2. Regulatory activities (including 401 certification);
3. Voluntary Restoration and Protection;
4. Water Quality Standards for wetlands.



# Wetland Program Plans (WPP): What are the benefits?

- ❖ WPPs assist S/T program development by encouraging them to think strategically about what they are going to do over a period of several years to build their wetlands program.
- ❖ WPPs facilitate discussion between EPA and S/T and help form a mutual understanding of the direction a S/T wetland program intends to take.
- ❖ WPPs allow EPA to be more effective in providing useful technical assistance.

# WPPs: Basic Information

- ❖ WPPs are encouraged, not mandated.
- ❖ WPPs are reviewed, commented on, and approved by EPA Regions, but do not receive a “score.”
- ❖ WPPs should be generally consistent with EPA’s Core Element Framework, but don’t have to cover all 4 of the Core Elements.
- ❖ S/T encouraged to talk to their EPA Region early on about content and process for WPPs.



# WWPs: Minimum Components

- ❖ Narrative description of overall program goal(s) for time period of plan.
- ❖ Actions/activities generally consistent with the Core Element Framework to be undertaken.
- ❖ Implementation schedule for broader based actions and/or more specific activities (including overall timeline of 3-6 years).



# Writing an WPP: Putting it all together

- ❖ Articulate your goals and objectives for each Program Core Element.
- ❖ Actions should reflect how you plan to achieve those goals and objectives.
- ❖ If you can associate a “who” with an action, then do so.
- ❖ Consider engagement with other program partners/supporters in putting together a WPP, but it’s not required.
- ❖ Don’t think of WPPs as something you are doing just for EPA \$\$, consider other potential funding sources that could fund these actions.



# Writing an WPP: Putting it all together

- ❖ Describe your actions as specifically (but as simply) as possible.
- ❖ If there are other documents that support an action, please provide that reference (or a link in your WPP).
- ❖ Identify your partners (briefly describe who is doing what).
- ❖ Consider how some of your proposed actions can support or build upon one another. Ex. Monitoring & Assessment and Restoration.



# Writing an WPP: More Tips

- ❖ Think of this as an opportunity to include other partnership efforts that intersect with your activities.
- ❖ Identify the resources that you are trying to address (maps are useful, or a narrative description of wetland types found in your area, etc).
- ❖ If a past WPG recipient, explain how those previous efforts tie into your future efforts. If WPP is being developed under a current EPA grant, identify the grant #.
- ❖ Identify a POC for the plan (so others know who to ask questions of).



# Wetland Program Plans: Relation to WPDGs

- ❖ WPPs are submitted to the EPA Regions independently of WPDG applications.
- ❖ WPPs should include all significant activities the S/T program intends to carry out over the ensuing 3-6 years, not just activities it hopes to fund through WPDGs.
- ❖ Any S/T with an approved WPP that is awarded a WPDG grant, should carry out activities articulated in the WPP.



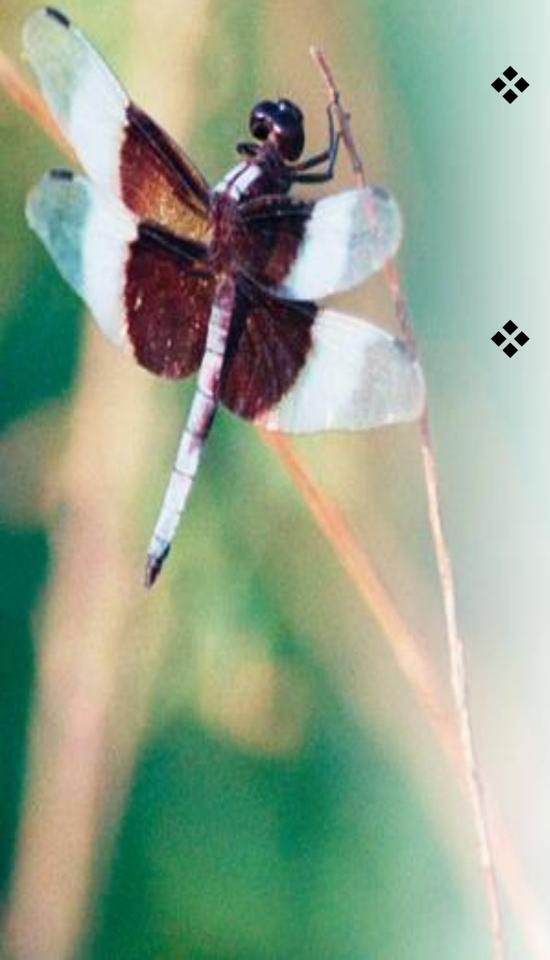
# WWPs & WPDGs

- ❖ Only program development activities articulated within a WPP can be funded through WPDGs (i.e. implementation activities cannot be funded).
- ❖ WPDG proposals to develop WPPs or carry out the activities in an approved WPP are placed in a separate “track” in the WPDG RFP, and do not compete against non-WPP proposals.
- ❖ However, more money relative to the number of proposals will be available in the WPP track of the WPDG RFP.



# Wetland Program Plans: Some Numbers

- ❖ As of the beginning of April 2012, 67 WPPs have been approved by EPA.
- ❖ Of these 67 WPPs, 32 are from states and 35 are from tribes.
- ❖ WPPs breakdown by Core Element covered (most WPPs cover multiple Core Elements):
  - Monitoring & Assessment: 48
  - Regulation: 30
  - Voluntary Restoration & Protection: 40
  - Water Quality Standards for Wetlands: 35



# Post-WPPs: Now what?

- ❖ Important to remember that WPPs will be made public upon approval from EPA.
- ❖ Be as specific as possible when articulating activities so that a reader would know if an activity has been accomplished or is proposed (i.e. grant proposals).
- ❖ Consider doing annual updates to WPPs as a matter of practice, instead of waiting to hear from EPA.
- ❖ To the extent possible, the Region will review WPP progress with the S/T every 2 or so years (ex: Are milestones being met? If not, why not? What help can EPA provide to get S/T back on track? etc.)



# Wetland Program Plans: Website

State and Tribal Wetland Program Plans | Wetlands | US EPA - Windows Internet Explorer provided by EPA

US EPA http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/wpp.cfm

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US EPA State and Tribal Wetland Program Plans | Wetlands | ...

US EPA

Drinking Water

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Drinking Water

Ground Water

Lakes

Oceans, Coasts, Estuaries & Beaches

Rivers & Streams

Stormwater

Wastewater

Watersheds

Wetlands

Where You Live

Pollution Prevention and Control

Science & Technology

Water Infrastructure

What You Can Do

You are here: [Water](#) » [Our Waters](#) » [Wetlands](#) » State and Tribal Wetland Program Plans

## State and Tribal Wetland Program Plans

Wetland Program Plans (WPPs) are voluntary plans developed and implemented by state agencies and tribes which articulate what these entities want to accomplish with their wetland programs over time. WPPs describe overall program goals along with broad-based actions and more specific activities that will help achieve the goals. Timelines for the WPPs vary between 3-6 years, with more specific timeframes typically associated with the Plan actions/activities.

EPA Regional offices review WPPs, and plans that have been approved by EPA are published on this Web page. The Web page includes the name of the state agency(ies) or tribe that developed the WPP, a link to the WPP itself, the years covered by the WPP, and the wetland program Core Elements covered by the WPP.

Further details about WPP content and submission, review, and approval process can be found in an [October 2009 EPA memorandum \(PDF\)](#) (8 pp, 51K, [About PDF](#)). WPPs must be generally consistent with the [Wetland Program Core Elements Framework](#).

EPA strongly encourages local governments, universities, nonprofit organizations, and other parties interested in wetland program development to review the WPPs listed here. Parties who are interested and able to collaborate with a state/tribe in carrying out the actions articulated in its WPP, or are otherwise interested in connecting their own wetland work with that of a particular state or tribal WPP, are encouraged to contact the individuals listed below.

In which EPA Region am I located?

[Region 1](#) [Region 2](#) [Region 3](#) [Region 4](#) [Region 5](#) [Region 6](#) [Region 7](#) [Region 8](#) [Region 9](#) [Region 10](#) [Element](#)

### Region 1

Core Element of a State/Tribal Wetlands Program

	Monitoring & Assessment	Regulation	Voluntary Restoration & Protection	Water Quality Standards for Wetlands
CT Dept. of Environmental Protection (PDF) (6 pp, 1.6MB, <a href="#">About PDF</a> ) (2010 - 2014) Contact: <a href="#">Darcy Winther</a> (darcy.winther@ct.gov) ph: (860) 424-3063		X		
MA Dept. of Environmental Protection (PDF) (10 pp, 2.2MB, <a href="#">About PDF</a> ) (2011- 2015) Contact: <a href="#">Lealdon Langley</a> (lealdon.langley@state.ma.us)	X	X	X	X

# CEF and WPP websites

- ❖ Website for the Core Element Framework:

[http://water.epa.gov/grants\\_funding/wetlands/cefintro.cfm](http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/wetlands/cefintro.cfm)

- ❖ Website for approved Wetland Program Plans:

<http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/wwwp.cfm>

- ❖ October 2009 WPP memorandum from EPA:

[http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/upload/wetland\\_program\\_plan\\_memorandum.pdf](http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/upload/wetland_program_plan_memorandum.pdf)