

# NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON WETLAND MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

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Ms. Vetter holds her M.Sc. from the Ohio State University in Natural Resource Management. She began her career with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1989 as a Sea Grant Fellow and has spent most of the past 12 years in the Wetlands Division. While at EPA, Ms. Vetter has worked on a variety of programs including wetland water quality standards and 401 certification, wetland research, biological assessment, and most recently the Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology work. She currently leads a workgroup of EPA regions and states which is working toward developing and incorporating wetland monitoring and assessment methods into traditional surface water monitoring programs.

## Abstract

Better information on the quality of our wetlands is needed to accurately measure the success of wetland programs and to effectively integrate wetlands into watershed management programs. While federal and state agencies have collected information on wetland type, location, and acreage changes for many years, very little information on the condition of our wetlands exists. Thus, it not possible to assess our progress in achieving Clean Water Act goals to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the Nation’s waters.”

To aid states and tribes in collecting consistent and statistically-reliable data, EPA is developing technical guidance on conducting systematic assessments of the chemical, physical, and biological conditions of our nation’s wetlands. Specifically, it will provide recommended approaches and methods for prioritizing watersheds, selecting wetlands for site assessment, monitoring wetland condition, cross-walking between existing classification systems, and reporting data. The technical framework organizes monitoring into two spatial scales. Information collected at the landscape scale assists with understanding watershed-level stresses to wetlands, classifying the population of wetlands, and setting priorities for implementing monitoring at the site scale. Site scale monitoring provides qualitative and quantitative data on the condition and stressors at specific wetland sites. This talk provides an overview of the national wetland monitoring strategy and its technical elements.