



ASSURED DELINEATOR PROGRAM

BACKGROUND AND OPPORTUNITIES



PRESENTED BY: STACY JEPSON , AMANDA MINKS & KARA BROOKS

DELINEATION OPTIONS

Two wetland location services specified in s. 23.321, Wis. Stat.

Wetland Identification

- Less than 5 acres
- Wetland presence/absence survey with boundary approximate
- Good for general project planning
 - Are wetlands a concern?
 - Can they be easily avoided?

Wetland Confirmation

- No size threshold
- Exact boundary confirmation
- Good for precise regulatory decisions and project planning
 - Specific wetland loss calculations
 - Wetland type to be impacted

ASSURED DELINEATOR BACKGROUND

Wetland confirmation required pursuant to s. s. 23.321, Wis. Stat.

DNR DOES NOT endorse assured wetland delineation work vs. non-assured wetland delineation consultants so long as statutory requirements are met

- Pilot program, 35 currently enrolled participants
- Private assured delineators complete delineations that do not require confirmation
 - Confirmation of “individuals vs. boundaries”
- Rigorous application process completed annually
- Annual auditing
- Must comply with code of conduct including performance and professional standards

Applicant Requirements

- Education
- Training (delineation courses)
- Experience (5 years delineating)
- Work Quality/Report

Evaluation

for Acceptance

to the Program Initiative

PROS & CONS OF THE PROGRAM

Benefits

- “Fills the gap”, current fee structure does not provide sufficient staff to meet demand
- Reduces regulatory review timeline for individual projects
- Gets good information to project managers and decision-makers

Challenges

- Staff resources for application review, auditing, training, etc.
- Lack of authority for enforcement and compliance
- Project enforcement

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Based on 1987 Corp Manual
- Standardized application process and scoring rubric

Tension points:

- Application windows
- Experience needed to apply
- Private sector investment for training/mentorship

WETLAND DELINEATION REPORT EVALUATION CRITERIA – RATING FORM (Rev. 3/21/12)			
Applicant	Rank	Weight	Score
Problem/Atypical Areas			
Note problem areas on data form and in reports		0.1	0
Note atypical (disturbed) areas on data form and in reports		0.1	0
Factor in problem area characteristics		0.5	0
Correctly apply disturbed area procedures		1	0
Subtotal			0
Vegetation			
Correct application of 50-20 rule or other dominance measure		1	0
Recognize proper plant dominance sequence		0.5	0
Plants identified to species level and correct indicator status		1	0
Correctly apply criteria in making hydrophytic vegetation determination		1	0
Subtotal			0
Hydrology			
Correctly recognize primary indicators		1	0
Correctly recognize FAC-Neutral		0.5	0
Correctly recognize geomorphic position and other secondary ind's		0.5	0
Consider seasonal hydrology and antecedent hydrology analysis		1	0
Correctly apply criteria in making hydrology determination		1	0
Subtotal			0
Soils			
Complete and accurate soil profile descriptions (deep enough, colored properly, textured, etc.)		1	0
Consistent application of hydric soils indicators		1	0
Accurately note hydric soils indicators		0.5	0
Correctly apply criteria in making hydric soils determination		1	0
Subtotal			0
Wetland Determinations			
All plot determinations correct based on field data		5	0
Subtotal			0
Data Forms			
Complete and legible forms		0.5	0
Subtotal			0
Field Methods			
Delineation during the growing season, not winter		1	0
Sufficient data points for the site		1	0
Transects correctly located		0.5	0
Subtotal			0
Reports			
Accurate map – boundaries shown, closed, correct location, field site shown, plots and transects shown		0.5	0
Map shows areas delineated		0.5	0
Complete reports - report adequately tells story of site		2.5	0
Methods documented		0.1	0
Subtotal			0

Difficult Wetland Situation Evaluation

Vegetation Criteria Evaluation

Hydrology Criteria Evaluation

Soil Criteria Evaluation

Field Data and Determinations

Field Method Evaluation

Report Component Evaluation

CODE OF ETHICS

- Knowingly injuring the reputation of another wetland delineator through biased or undocumented claims
- Knowingly taking part in an activity that results in the violation of state or federal wetland or waterway regulations
- Knowingly falsifying or misrepresenting a wetland boundary
- Signing your name to a non-assured delineator's work
- Failing to submit delineation reports to the wetland assurance program as they are completed
- Repeatedly failing to apply standard wetland delineation protocols
- Failing to keep abreast of the current state of science, including techniques, methods, and reporting protocols (ongoing training requirement)

See “Assured Delineator Infraction Prioritization Guidance” for more information

AUDIT PROCESS

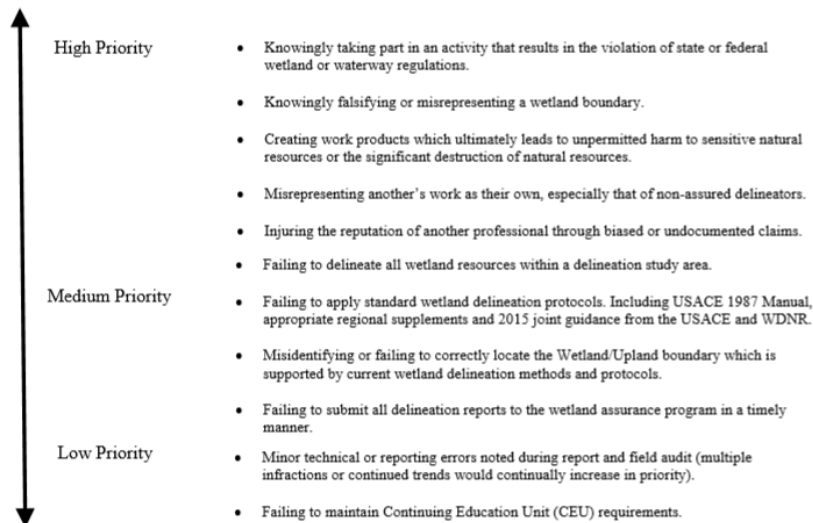
Assured Delineator Infraction Prioritization and Procedures

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to support consistent prioritization and responsiveness to issues associated with the Wisconsin DNR Assured Delineator Program. This document is intended to facilitate the discussion in differentiating the level of potential severity of an infraction as related to the "Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources- Assured Delineator Participation Agreement" and probable outcomes from said infraction(s).

Background

The Wetland Identification Team created a priority spectrum that outlines high, medium and low priority assured delineator program infractions.



Goals:

- Accountability
- Program integrity
 - Ensure code of ethics compliance

Tension points:

- Limited staff resources
- Removal of program has significant professional consequences for the delineator
 - Becomes elevated

NEEDS

- Legal framework to issue certification and manage program
 - Stronger framework for 404 initiative
- Maintain program integrity and confidence in the program
 - Allows for consequences for infractions
- Consistent communication between DNR, USACE and private delineators
- Improved training opportunities to continue to bolster expertise in Wisconsin