VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF WETLAND PROFESSIONALS UPDATE

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Summer 1994

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Dear Members and Friends:

A hearty welcome to the inaugural edition of the Newsletter of the Virginia Association of Wetland Professionals. This publication is designed to provide you with information that is helpful in your work with wetlands in Virginia. This edition is heavy on "info-tidbits" but light on articles of substance. We hope that you will help us change this mix by quickly submitting your articles (as well as additional "info-tidbits") as soon as possible. Moreover, your comments and suggestions on improving the form and content of this newsletter are welcome.

Also, please tell us if you would like a different, perhaps catchier name for the publication. We may award an appropriate prize to the individual proposing the winning name if we are in the mood to do so.

Please send your suggestions for names, articles, comments etc. to [Note: the following is the correct address, please adjust your rolodex if necessary]: VAWP, Attn: Newsletter Committee, P. O. Box 1262, Richmond, VA 23210.

We look forward to hearing from you.

The Newsletter Committee

PROFESSIONAL WETLAND CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS UPDATE

By Harold Jones

The 1994 goals for the VAWP include examining the current need for professional certification of wetland delineators and exploring various options for developing and implementing such a program within the Commonwealth of Virginia. The VAWP has formed a Wetland Delineator Certification Committee. The appointees are Nancy Barker, Gary Cooke, R. Harold Jones, Jack Kane, Lee Mallonee, Jim Perry, and Steven Russell. The committee met during the fourth week of June to begin discussions on these issues, formulate strategies, allocate responsi-

bilities for tasks, and provide recommendations to the Board.

The Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS) has officially implemented their certification program. The society, an international organization, will provide certifications for Professional Wetlands Scientists (PWS) and Wetland Professional in Training (WPIT) to qualified applicants. As of June 5, 1994, approximately 40 individuals have received PWS certifications and two individuals have received verification that they qualify for WPIT status. As with other professional societies

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Professional Wetlands...

Continued from page 1

which have initiated certification programs, SWS has approved a grand-fathering clause allowing much initial latitude in educational requirements, but not in experience requirements. This grandfathering period will apply to applicants through June 1, 1995. For an application package you may contact the SWS Business Office, P. O. Box 1897, Lawrence, Kansas 66044-8897, telephone (913) 843-1221.

The Army Corps of Engineers completed three demonstration projects for the Wetland Delineator Certification Program (WDCP) in March, 1994. The

demonstration projects, which began in March 1993, took place in the states of Washington, Maryland, and Florida and were administered by the Seattle, Baltimore, and Jacksonville districts, respectively. The intent of the WDCP is: (1) to improve the quality and consistency of wetland delineations submitted to the Corps and (2) to streamline the regulatory process by developing procedures for expediting review and consideration of wetland delineations submitted by certified wetland delineators. Individuals passing both the written test and a field practicum administered by one of the demonstration districts will remain provisionally certified until a final WDCP is implemented nationwide. The Corps intends to issue a proposed rule for the WDCP in the *Federal Register* in late spring or early summer of 1994, with an opportunity for public notice and comments. The Corps anticipates implementing the WDCP nationwide upon completion of the rulemaking process. When published, copies of the proposed rule will be available from the Norfolk District office, the EPA Wetlands Hotline (800) 832-7828, or the Regulatory Branch of the Office of the Chief of Engineers (202) 272-0199.

For information regarding the SWS PWS/WPIT program or the Corps' WDCP certification program, you can contact R. Harold Jones at (804) 441-7777. *

VAWP QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The following are the results of the questionnaires which were distributed at the initial meeting of VAWP.

What is your profession?

Environmental (Wetland) Scientists came in first with 16 followed by (nine) Consultants, (four) Environmental (Wetland) Engineers, (three) Lawyers, (three) Surveyors, and one or two of the following professions: Academia, Planner, Environmental Tech., Forester, Business, Landscape, Architect, and Fish & Wildlife Biologist.

Where is the most convenient location to meet and when?

There was a tie between Richmond and Tidewater with VIMS coming in a strong third place. Most people wanted to meet on a weekend, preferably Saturday, with Friday as their next choice.

Newsletter

Everyone felt a newsletter would be beneficial to the membership, and most thought it should be published quarterly. Suggested topics were: regulation, research & abstracts, mitigation & project design, training/certification, delineation, current events, policy, functions & values, workshops, current wetland issues, endangered species, new technology & technology transfer, hydrology, tech. book reviews, associated news, school partnerships, local/regional issues, interesting projects, soils, and restoration.

Twenty-two people said they would be willing to write an article for the newsletter, and 20 would be willing to contact others to write articles.

Membership Directory

Almost everyone wanted a membership directory and the majority wanted name, profession, address, telephone, and fax number included. About half of those surveyed wanted area of expertise included.

Symposia or Workshops

Forty people indicated an interest in this category. Most were interested in mitigation and design workshops or symposia. Other subjects suggested were: delineation, regulations, habitat and functional evaluation, policy, current issues, functions and values, delineation of disturbed site, plant/soil identification, banking, identification of grasses, stormwater management and certification.

Panel Topics

Suggested topics for a panel included mitigation, delineation, BMPs, environmental education, legal, regulation, surveying, policy, functional analysis, development planning, ecology, wetland creation monitoring, costs of alternatives analysis, hydrology, and applicant's experience with regulatory process. Eight people are willing to serve on a panel and 35 people indicated they would ask others to participate.

Design Competition

Those surveyed were split on this question with 17 yes and 15 no. The two main categories suggested were mitigation and stream restoration. Two other categories were shoreline stabilization and beach nourishment. *

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Member:

Having successfully overcome our first major challenge—convincing the U.S. Postal Service of our correct address—the Virginia Association of Wetland Professionals is ready to move forward.

The questionnaire distributed at the first annual meeting provided plenty of information and guidance for our Board, and equally important, volunteers to serve on our committees.

Through these committees, and with your help this year, VAWP hopes to:

- Double our membership;
- Produce two issues of the newsletter;
- Present two symposia or workshops;
- Work with the Commonwealth to certify wetland delineators or a draft certification program;
- Establish training and education opportunities in wetlands issues including delineation;
- Publish a VAWP membership directory, and
- Identify available funding opportunities for VAWP.

Despite our fledgling status as a new organization, we're confident we can accomplish these goals.

Many members have already proven their perseverance by sending in their dues twice when the post office had our address listed incorrectly. I hope you'll put that tenacity to work to help us build a strong resource for wetland professionals.

I look forward to working with each of you, and hope you'll share your ideas and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Jean G. Watts President, VAWP

RECENT AND UPCOMING CORPS POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

Recent Developments

On January 6, 1994, the Corps, the Soil Conservation Service (the "SCS"). EPA, and the Department of the Interior entered into an agreement (which makes the SCS the lead agency for making wetland determinations on agricultural lands under both the Clean Water Act and the Food Security Act. "Agricultural lands" are defined as "those lands intensively used and managed for the production of food or fiber to the extent that the natural vegetation has been removed and cannot be used to determine whether the area meets applicable hydrophytic vegetation criteria in making wetland delineations."

The agreement requires the four agencies to develop a set of "mapping conventions" for SCS's use in making wetland delineations on agricultural lands. The deadline for implementing the agreement was May 6, 1994.

Additionally, in mid-May, to emphasize that all wetlands are not of equal value, EPA and the Corps issued guidance to its field staff highlighting the flexibility that exists to apply a less vigorous permit review for small projects with minor environmental impacts.

Proposals Under Development

The Corps is currently conducting an internal review for several important regulatory proposals, including:

Nationwide Permits

The Corps plans to publish several proposed rules for public comment later this summer affecting several existing nationwide permits and proposing several new NWPs.

NWP #26 (Headwaters and Isolated Discharges): The Corps will propose that the acreage limits in NWP #26 be lowered to either 1/4, 1/3, or 1/2 of an acre for fills without notice and 3, 5, or 10 acres for total NWP #26 fills. The Corps will propose one combination of

these limits, but will seek comment on all of the potential combinations.

NWP #18 (Minor Discharges): The Corps will propose raising the limits in NWP #18 from 25 cubic yards and 1/10 an acre of wetlands impacts to 50 cubic yards and either 1/8 or 1/4 an acre of wetlands impacts.

NWP #19 (Minor Dredging): The Corps will propose to increase the limit in NWP #19 from 25 cubic yards to 50 cubic yards.

The Corps will also propose to combine NWPs 18 and 19 into NWP 26. This will consolidate these related NWPs. However, it is unclear at this time if this will diminish the individual utility of any of the three NWPs.

Several "housekeeping" changes will be made to other existing NWPs to make clarifications and reflect recent administrative interpretations.

The Corps will also propose two new NWPs:

- · A new NWP for mining activities:
- A new NWP for wetlands excluded from regulation by the SCS under the Food Security Act (i.e. Minimal effects determinations and the cropped wetlands exemption) subject to conditions and, possibly, acreage limitations.

Other Policy Initiatives

The Corps will publish a regulation this summer proposing an administrative appeal process, for landowners to contest wetland delineations and permit denials. It is likely that appeals will go to a District level Corps appeals board.

In July or August, the Corps will publish a proposal to develop and implement a wetland delineator certification program.

Finally, this fall, the Corps will publish a proposal which would require the Corps to issue a decision, with minor exceptions, on most permit applications within 90 days after the application is complete. ❖

VAWP - COMMITTEE INFORMATION

The following describes the various committees of the VAWP, their functions, members, and chairs.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE - responsible for developing and distributing a quarterly newsletter to VAWP members. Members include:

Sherry Ashe Jack Kane Ann Jennings

Daniel Slone, Chair (804) 775-1041

SYMPOSIA COMMITTEE - responsible for organizing workshops and symposia relevant to wetland regulatory and resources issues. Members include:

Robert Atkinson Ann Jennings Christine Breddy Rebecca Martin George Buckhholz Silvia Gazzera

James Martin, Chair (703) 471-1441

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE - responsible for maintaining and increasing the membership of the VAWP taking appropriate measures to attract new members. Members include:

Eric Fox Cynthia Taylor David Knepper Martin Mitchell Bruce Schwenneker, Chair

(804) 873-8700

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE - responsible for the promotion and im-

provement of the finances of the VAWP and the legal status of the organization. Members include:

Gary Cooke Donald Rice

Walter Priest, Chair (804) 642-7385

PROGRAM COMMITTEE - responsible for assembling a program for the annual meeting other than the business session. Members include:

Anita Allen Lisa Billow Sandra Crystall David Davis William Ellis Pam Mason Leo Snead

Collin Powers, Chair (804) 355-9655

NOMINATION COMMITTEE - responsible for recommending the names of candidates for elected offices and assembling their resumes for publication in the newsletter. Members include:

Gary Cooke Jim Perry Dawn McGrain Cheryl Smith

Ann Jennings, Chair (804) 693-6694

WETLAND DELINEATORS CERTIFI-CATION COMMITTEE - responsible for developing recommendations and modifications of minimum requirements for certifying professional wetland delineators. Members include:

> Nancy Barker Lee Mallonee Gary Cooke Steve Russell Harold Jones Jim Perry Jack Kane

WETLAND DELINEATION EDUCA-

TION PANEL - responsible for implementing the certification program by determining eligibility of applicants and shall, on behalf of the VAWP, have the authority to confer certification as a wetland delineator. Members include:

Kirk Havens Mariellen Soltys Jim Perry Hal Wiggins Leo Snead

Bruce Schwenneker Miles Pocta Robert Atkinson, Chair (703) 231-6057

BYLAWS COMMITTEE - responsible for drafting proposed changes to the VAWP bylaws to be presented to members at the annual meeting. Members include: Ann Jennings, Chair (804) 693-6694 .

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 9 & 24 & August 3: Chesapeake Bay Seminar on Oyster Conservation, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Annapolis, MD. Contact: (410) 268-8816.

July 10-13: A Global Perspective for Reducing CSOs: Balancing Technologies, Costs, and Water Quality, Louisville, KY. Contact: Nancy Blatt, Water Environment Federation, 601 Wythe Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-1994, (703) 684-2400/2464.

August 1: VAWP Executive Board Meeting, Richmond, VA Airport, 2:00 p.m.

August 17-19: Environmental Issues Affecting Forestry and Forest Products Industries of the Eastern United States, Baltimore, MD. Contact: J. Daniel Dolan, (703) 231-8839, or Angela Riegel (703) 231-7107.

August 27: Native Plant Seminar, Stevenson, MD. Contact: St. Timothy's School, Irvine Science Center (410) 484-7413.

Sept. 17: Estuaries Day, York River State Park. Contact: (804) 566-3036.

Oct. 5-6: Conference on the Use of Stream Bank Forest Buffers in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, Ellicott City, MD, Turf Valley Hotel. Contact: Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (410) 377-6270.

Oct. 12-13: Public Awareness Workshop on Dam Safety and Floodplain Management, Blacksburg, VA. Contact: Richard Dameron, Bureau of Rivers and Shores (804) 371-6095.

Oct. 19-22: Ecosystem Management & Restoration for the 21st Century, Palm Beach Gardens, FL. Contact: Bill Helfferich, South Florida Water Management District, P. O. Box 24680, West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680, (407) 687-6637.

Nov. 14-16: Management of Environmental Problems for Public Officials, Richmond, VA, Omni Hotel. Registration information available in August. Contact: (703) 684-2464. ❖

VAWP COMMITTEES: WHAT'S HAPPENING?

The Membership Committee has been actively pursuing VAWP's goal of doubling its membership this year, meeting twice since the committee was initially formed. Thanks to Marty Mitchell, we have the first membership cards which you should already have or receive shortly. The initial membership drive targets existing organizations that have lists or directories of members that can be obtained as a target mailing list. If any members have access to compiled membership lists of professional organizations whose members may be interested in VAWP, please let one of the committee members know. We are preparing an introductory letter and application form inviting new members to join which will be mailed to those on target lists. Other activities include developing a standard acknowledgement letter for new members and a format for our first directory. If any members have ideas on information they would like to see in the directory, please pass them on to one of the committee members so that we can develop a directory to best suit the membership needs.

The Symposia Committee will present a workshop on wetland delineation issues and techniques for problem areas and disturbed wetlands on July 15, 1994, at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester Point. See the Workshop registration on the back page for more details and registration information. Plans are also underway for a multiday wetland symposium to be held in conjunction with the annual business meeting in 1995. Various topics for the symposium, such as wetland classification, functional assessment techniques, mitigation, and wetlands research are surfacing. The Symposia Committee is very interested in suggestions from VAWP members for symposium topics. If you have any ideas, please contact one of the committee members.

The Wetland Delineators Certification Committee will investigate development of a certification program in Virginia either through the Commonwealth, the VAWP, or other sources. The Wetland Delineation Education Panel will ultimately serve to implement a VAWP-sponsored certification program, if such a program is developed. While plans for a wetland delineation certification program are developing, the education panel will establish training and education opportunities in wetland issues, including delineation.

The Program, Nomination, and Bylaws Committees will hold their first meetings in late summer. Members for the Bylaws Committee, which will draft proposed changes to the VAWP bylaws, have not been selected. If you are interested in participating. please contact the committee chairperson. The Ways and Means Committee is in the process of getting organized and is seeking sponsors, public and/or private, to underwrite in whole or in part the expenses of the workshop planned for July 15, 1994. If your firm or organization would like to participate, please call Walt Priest at (804) 642-7385. Any and all contributions will be greatly appreciated and gratefully acknowledged. *

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

The following are newsletters and periodicals that may be useful to you: *Newsletter*, Society of Wetland Scientists, South Atlantic Chapter, P. O. Box 1897, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

The Virginia Wetlands Report, quarterly, no charge, Wetlands Program, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, P. O. Box 1346, Gloucester Point, Virginia 23062.

DEQ Regulations Update, monthly, Regulations Update, P. O. Box 10009, Richmond, Virginia 23240.

Nonpoint Source News-Notes, occasionally, no charge, NPS News-Notes, c/o
Terrence Institute, 1717 K Street, N.W.,
Suite 801, Washington, DC 20006.
National Westlands Newslatter, bi-

National Wetlands Newsletter, bimonthly, \$48, National Wetlands Newsletter, Environmental Law Institute, 1616 P Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Runoff Report, free to members, National NonPoint Source Federation,

P. O. Box 30101, Kansas City, Missouri 64112.

Wetland News, Association of State Wetland Managers, Inc., P. O. Box 2463, Berne, New York 12023-9746. The Wildlife, bimonthly, \$36 (membership), The Wildlife Society, 5410 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, Maryland 20814-2197.

Newsletter of the Southeastern Section of the Wildlife Society, Newsletter, SE Section, TWS, 816 Highway 348 East, New Albany, Mississippi 38652. SWS Bulletin, Society of Wetland Scientists, P. O. Box 1897, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

Natural Science, Conservation Biology Books, Patricia Ledlie Bookseller, Inc., One Bean Road, P. O. Box 90, Buckfield, Maine 04220.

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Journal, monthly, Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, 6600 York Road, Suite 100, Baltimore, Maryland 21212.

Wetland Journal, Environmental Concern, Inc., P. O. Box P, 210 West Chew Avenue, St. Michaels, Maryland 21663. Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program Newsletter, quarterly, 629 E. Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Environmental Quarterly, free, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4201.

Conservation News, Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District, P. O. Box 677, Gloucester, Virginia 23061.

Virginia's Tributary Strategies, 629 E. Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Chesapeake Bay Currents, Chesapeake Bay Local Government Advisory Committee, c/o Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002.

BOOK REVIEW

Wetland Planting Guide for the Northeastern United States Plants for Wetland Creation, Restoration, and Enhancement

Author: Gwendolyyn A. Thunhorst

Published by Environmental Concern, Inc., St. Michaels, Maryland 1993. (410) 745-9620 ISBN 1-883226-02-3

An excellent guide for wetland professionals interested in selecting plant species for various wetlands situations. The guide is divided into four plant sections: Submerged and Floating Aquatic Vegetation, Herbaceous Emergent Vegetation, Shrubs, and Trees. Each section has the plants listed alphabetically by scientific name followed by some common names. Each species is sketched and is accompanied by a section on each of the following: Characteristics, Growth, Planting, Habitat, Wildlife Benefit, and Hydrology.

Of particular interest to wetland designers is the Hydrology Section that discusses the wetland regime for which the plant is most suited and the Planting Section that discusses what forms of the plant (seeds, rootstock, bulbs, etc.) are available for planting and suggested spacing for uniform cover.

The index contains both common and scientific names for easy reference. The plant sketches are somewhat lacking in detail; however, it must be noted that this guide is not intended as an identification manual and other sources are available for that function.

In summary, the guide is a good reference book for both the wetland scientist interested in designing created wetlands and also the novice who is simply interested in wetland plants.

Kirk J. Havens
Marine Scientist
College of William & Mary
School of Marine Science
Virginia Institute of Marine
Science

VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF WETLAND PROFESSIONALS

Dear Colleague:

We cordially invite you to join the Virginia Association of Wetland Professionals (VAWP).

What is VAWP?

VAWP is a non-profit organization developed to exchange ideas on wetlands in Virginia. From the organization by-laws, the purposes of the association are to:

- (a) Bring together wetland scientists, regulators, managers, design professionals, attorneys, and other wetland professionals in an independent forum that promotes discussion and exchange of ideas on wetland issues important in Virginia.
- (b) Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of wetland management through the development and operation of certification programs, training, and education in wetland delineation, functional assessment, best management practices, mitigation, and other areas.
- (c) Encourage improved public and private partnerships, planning, and protection of wetlands based on best available science, technology, and engineering practices.

- (d) Encourage the conservation and responsible use of wetland resources.
- (e) Encourage and promote continued research and public education in the area of wetland functions and values.

What you will receive:

- · Periodic Newsletters
- Discounted fees for workshops and symposia
- Direct connection with the only network of wetland professionals in the state
- · Membership directory
- Opportunity to participate in activities to bring about better wetland management throughout the state.

What you won't find is a group committed to one ideology. Our members are as varied in their philosophies as they are in their professions.

If you would like to join and share in our association goals, please fill out the form on page 8, enclose a check for \$20, and mail to:

Virginia Association of Wetland Professionals Suite 1262 1001 E. Main Street Richmond, Virginia 23219-3511

VAWP WORKSHOP NIGHTMARE DELINEATIONS

What

A closer look at the accursed wetland delineations that are not for the squeamish or weak of heart. Picture, if you will:

- · Deeply disturbed sites
- · Sands and Triassic Park
- Plants that have never read Reed, 1988
- Primary and secondary hydroillogical indicators

VAWP is proud to have enlisted some veteran wetland-slayers to share the wealth of their experience, including:

- Harold Jones, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- Jim Perry, Virginia Institute of Marine Science;
- Nancy Barker, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB);
- Steve Martin, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;
- Jerry Quesenberry, U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service.

Why

To take some of the horror out of nightmare delineations by expanding our understanding of systems that are disturbed or atypical. Ultimately, the knowledge disseminated in this workshop should make the delineation of these systems a little less mystifying.

Where

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), Gloucester Point, Virginia. VIMS is located off of Route 17 immediately northeast of the Coleman Bridge over the York River. The workshop will be held in the auditorium of Waterman's Hall.

When

Friday July 15, 1994, from 8:30 a.m. until approximately 3:30 p.m. Speakers will begin at 9:00 p.m.

How Much

\$10 for members and \$15 for nonmembers.

Lunch

VAWP will provide a box lunch. The cost of the lunch is included in the registration fee.

Registration

You must register in advance to receive lunch. Tear off the attached registration form on the bottom of this page, fill it out, and return (or fax) to VAMP by July 8, 1994. Faxed registrations must be followed by a mail in registration including payment.

Question Box

At the end of the presentation, our experts will form a panel to discuss questions. You are encouraged to present a question on the registration form. The panel will attempt to address as many of the questions as is practicable. ❖

REGISTRATION FORM

VAWP Workshop Nightmare Delineations Submit by July 8, 1994

(Please Print or Type)

reiephone.					
Check One: ☐ Member (\$10)		□ Non-member (\$15)			
Please enclose chec to VAWP.	k or money order	Mail to:	VAWP - Workshop P.O. Box 1262 Richmond, VA 23219	Fax (804) 693-9032 c/o Ann Jennings	
QUESTION (for Exp	ert Panel Discussion):				