

Wetland Delineation and Report Requirements

11/4/04

The purpose of a wetland report is to convey an objective description of the extent and location of wetlands at a given site using field data, review of relevant background information, photographs, maps, and other information. Any report submitted to the City of Bellevue must be prepared by an experienced and qualified wetland biologist with demonstrated experience in delineating lowland wetlands in Puget Sound or Western Washington. The city will review the report for completeness and accuracy and may request additional information, clarification, or a field confirmation before making a final boundary determination. (Field confirmation will involve a site visit by the city's consultant and is at the applicant's expense.) Once the city approves the wetland delineation and study, the applicant is responsible for a survey of the approved boundary and for submitting a surveyed map of the wetland boundary. If you have any questions concerning any of these requirements, please visit or call the Permit Center at 425-452-6864 or contact the Environmental Planning Manager at 425-452-2739 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday (Wednesday, 10 to 4). The hearing impaired can dial 711 for assistance.

At a minimum, any report on wetlands submitted to the city for review must contain the following:

Executive Summary: Include a summary that briefly reviews the wetland characteristics of the site, the major conclusions, and the likely regulatory implications.

Introduction: Include an introduction that outlines the scope of services and a description of the site. Include a site vicinity map.

Methodology: Include a brief description of the methods used to do the delineation and site review. (A detailed description should be included in an appendix.) The city has adopted the *Washington State Wetlands Identification and Delineation Manual* (March 1997). This section should also describe how data points were chosen, how many data points were used, the sampling technique used, and what information was collected at each data point. Also describe how the boundary was marked, what color the flags are, and how many were used. (Delineators should uniquely identify the boundaries of each wetland in the field by attaching a colored, lettered, and number flag to vegetation or survey stakes.) Sample plots for which data are recorded should also be identified. In general, complex sites should have more sample points to adequately reflect ground conditions, whereas smaller, less complex sites may only need a few sample points. Explain any deviations from standard sampling methodology

Background and Supporting Information: Please note the documents and references used to support the delineation and wetland report. Describe relevant information from each and include any pertinent personnel communication from residents, other experts, or city staff.

Results: Summarize results for each wetland delineated on the site. Outline the rationale for determination of the wetland boundary and describe how it was marked. Include an estimate of the size of each wetland. Soils must be examined to a depth below the A horizon, or to 18 inches, whichever is greater as outlined in the *Washington State Wetlands Identification and Delineation Manual* (March 1997). Report on soil characteristics including Munsell colors, mottling, oxidized rhizospheres, textures, and moisture content. Include a description of any special features of the site and its surroundings and submit photographs clearly depicting significant or distinguishing features and wetland boundary edges and surrounding context. Key boundary photographs to data collection points on the map. Fully characterize the hydrologic connections among wetlands or between wetlands and streams on and off the site. Note and photograph all surface water connections.

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Functional Assessment: Include a functional assessment of each wetland identified on the site using Ecology's *Methods for Assessing Wetland Functions, Volume 1: Riverine and Depressional Wetlands in the Lowlands of Western Washington* (Ecology Publication #99-115, 1999). Such an assessment should include both the potential to perform the functions (based on wetland characteristics) and its opportunity to perform the functions (based on contributing basin size and land uses). Summarize the results in a table and include the detailed assessment data sheets in an appendix. (Alternate approaches are acceptable if approved by the city.)

Regulatory Implications and Impact Assessment: Summarize local, state, and federal regulations that may apply. After conferring with appropriate city staff, note appropriate classification of the wetland and justification for that classification as described in Section 4.3 of the *Sensitive Area Notebook* or future rating systems used by the city. If information is known about the development proposal intended for the site, describe how the wetland or wetlands will be adversely affected by the proposed project.

Map: Include a site map with the following features.

- Existing physical features in the area, including structures, streams, riparian corridors, water bodies, streets, utilities, easements, and setbacks.
- Location information (legal description, parcel number, and City of Bellevue address).
- Wetlands and buffers up to 200 feet off site.
- Contours at the smallest available interval. Where development will intrude and mitigation is proposed, a qualified professional surveyor must map flagged wetland boundaries and numbered sample plots at two-foot contour intervals. (This survey should be conducted after confirmation of wetland boundaries by the city.)
- North arrow and scale.
- Vegetation mapped according to the classification system outlined in *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States*, Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1979. (FWS/OBS-79 31)
- Hydrologic mapping showing the patterns of water movement into, through, the site. Where streams are present, additional information about stream channel morphology may be required.
- Previously mapped wetland boundary as shown in the *Sensitive Area Notebook* or more recent source and the edge indicated by the new study.
- Newly located wetland boundaries, along with the boundaries of any transition and/or adjacent wetland areas. Recorded numbered flags delineating wetland boundaries and data points on the map. Include the estimated size of the wetlands and locate appropriate setbacks if known.

Figures: Include a vicinity map, recent aerial photograph, National Wetlands Inventory Map, and Soils Map.

Wetland Verification and Survey: During boundary definition, the edge of the wetland should be flagged. After reviewing the preliminary results, city staff may request field verification. Surveying of wetland boundary by a licensed land surveyor should occur only after field verification has occurred or city staff has informed the applicant in writing that no verification is required.