National Wetland Condition Assessment:
Goals and Objectives
National Reporting
Using the Information

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National Assessment Goals

1. Produce a national report that describes the ecological condition of the nation’s wetlands

2. Help States and Tribes implement wetland monitoring and assessment programs

3. Advance the science of wetlands monitoring and assessment
National Assessment Objectives

- **Report baseline wetland ecological condition**
  - For the entire nation and within ecoregions
  - By wetland class for the entire nation
  - By state or tribal area (provided the state or tribe invests additional resources to conduct an intensification study)

- **Develop plans for continued monitoring**, post survey, to identify wetland ecosystem condition trends through time

- **Build state and tribal capacity**
  - Develop scalable methods and indicators
  - Provide field training and equipment
  - Encourage/support state or tribal intensification studies

- **Advance the science of wetlands M&A**
  - Integrate reporting of wetland acreage with condition assessment
  - Consider how wetland condition impacts the delivery of ecosystem services.
  - Consider how climate change will affect wetland condition
  - Calibrate USA Rapid Assessment Methodology
Wadeable Streams Assessment (2004)

West
152,425 stream miles
27.4% Good
25.9% Fair
4.5% Poor
2.0% Not Assessed
1.7% Not Available

Plains and Lowlands
242,264 stream miles
40.0% Good
29.0% Fair
29.0% Poor
2.0% Not Assessed

Eastern Highlands
276,362 stream miles
51.8% Good
18.2% Fair
20.4% Poor
2.0% Not Assessed

National Biological Quality
24.9% Good
41.9% Fair
28.2% Poor
5.0% Not Assessed

WSA Mega Regions*
West
Lowlands
Eastern Highlands
*biased on stream length averages
Figure ES-2. Extent of stressors and their relative risk to the biological condition of the nation’s streams (U.S. EPA/WSA).
Aggregations of Level 3 Ecoregions

Used in Wadable Streams Assessment and National Lakes Survey
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Cowardin Wetland Categories in NWCA Sampling Frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estuarine Intertidal Emergents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estuarine Intertidal Shrub/Scrub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palustrine Forested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palustrine Shrub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palustrine Emergents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palustrine Unconsolidated Bottom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palustrine Aquatic Bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palustrine farmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estuarine Aquatic Bed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broad HGM Classes of Wetlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flats</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
How will EPA Use the Report to Inform National Policy?
Figure 1. Water quality in assessed river and stream miles.

Table 1. Individual Use Support in Assessed River and Stream Miles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designated Use</th>
<th>Assessed Miles</th>
<th>Percent of Total U.S. Stream Miles</th>
<th>Percent of Waters Assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fish, Shellfish, and Wildlife</td>
<td>596,433</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>Good: 55%  Threatened: 4%  Impaired: 41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection/Propagation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>321,750</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>Good: 64%  Threatened: 3%  Impaired: 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>189,332</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Good: 92%  Threatened: &lt;1% Impaired: 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic Life Harvesting</td>
<td>186,721</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Good: 57%  Threatened: 16% Impaired: 27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Water Supply</td>
<td>150,492</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Good: 81%  Threatened: 2%  Impaired: 18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Water-bodies can have multiple designated uses, resulting in overlap of Assessed Miles.

http://www.epa.gov/305b/2002report/
305(b): What About Wetlands?

- 2002: Six states provided information on support of designated uses for 1.3 million acres of wetlands.
- 52% percent of these assessed acres identified as impaired.
  - Metals (primarily mercury)
  - Organic enrichment/low dissolved oxygen
  - Sediment/siltation
Charge to the Work Group

- *Develop Portfolio or Toolbox of Indicator Types, Indicators, and Candidate Metrics*

- Represent key wetland ecosystem components

- Accommodate different assessment questions and the diversity of wetland classes.