PRO 300–a): Determining Presence/Absence of Wetlands and Other Waters (Scoping)

See also: EPM Chapter 300, TSK 300-a (wetland inventory), ERS database

Effective Mar 2012

Start procedure: During the Scoping process, the Project Engineer's Office (PEO) requests a qualified wetland specialist to conduct an inventory of aquatic resources in the project area.

End procedure: The Wetland and Stream Inventory is distributed to the environmental coordinator and the project engineer.

Actor:	Action:
PEO	1. **Provides the project area to the wetland expert and requests a wetland inventory.** a. Provides a point of contact familiar with the project design. b. Provides project plan sheets showing the project area or proposed project alternatives. c. Provides written right of entry for access to non-DOT property, if within the project area. d. Provides a brief project description and project purpose e. Ideally provides enough lead time so that field work can be conducted between March and September.
Wetland Expert	2. **Researches project area, schedules and conducts field work, generates sketch map, writes** Wetland and Stream Inventory memo**.** See Task 300-a.
Environmental Coordinator	3. Determines potential wetland impacts and permits based on wetland inventory and alternatives (coordinates with PE). 4. Fills out **Environmental Review Summary** 5. Documents avoidance for use in NEPA for mitigation sequencing
PE	6. **Develops design alternatives that avoid or minimize potential wetland impacts** (coordinates with EC)

	7. **Includes potential costs of wetland impacts and mitigation in project definition** (coordinates with mitigation specialist)
Mitigation Specialist	8. Works on mitigation options including Advance Mitigation (see PRO 300-b)

Notes:

1. A wetland inventory is not required for the Environmental Review Summary, but it is required to complete the Environmental Classification Summary. If an inventory is not conducted, there is a risk of:
    a. underestimating the costs and time required for the NEPA process,
    b. incorrectly classifying a project, and
    c. finding an unexpected wetland during the latter stages of design or construction that can affect the timely completion of a project.
2. A wetland delineation and assessment expands on the work of an inventory, and is required in the beginning of the NEPA process. A wetland assessment may be requested instead of an inventory, but it takes longer and costs more.

TSK 300–a: Inventorying Wetlands and Other Waters (Scoping)

See also: EPM Chapter 300, PRO 200-a, PRO 300-a, Wetland and Stream Inventory **Effective Mar 2012**

Start task: Wetland Specialist gets request from Project Engineer's Office (PEO) for wetland inventory.

End task: Wetland and Stream Inventory Memo distributed to PEO.

1. **Research** project area using GIS Workbench and other resources to determine:
    a. Presence of NWI-mapped wetlands or local wetland inventories,
    b. NRCS mapped hydric soil units and hydric soil inclusions,
    c. Topography, and
    d. Prior wetland field work.

2. **Schedules and conducts field work** during the growing season, typically March-October, if possible.
    a. Wetland presence or absence based on brief field visit to the project area,
    b. Stream and other aquatic resource presence, if any,
    c. Generates hand-drawn map of approximate locations and extent of wetlands and other aquatic resources, and
    d. Estimates categories of wetlands.

3. **Writes** Wetland and Stream Inventory Memo containing:
    a. Brief project description from PEO,
    b. Brief description of field methods,
    c. Hand-drawn map showing limits of the area examined (study area) and approximate locations and extent of wetlands and other aquatic resources, and
    d. A table summarizing wetlands and other aquatic resources, categories and likely buffer size.

4. **Distribute** Wetland and Stream Inventory Memo to PEO, or as instructed.