

A landscape photograph showing a vast wetland area in the foreground, filled with tall, golden-brown grasses. In the background, a range of mountains stretches across the horizon under a clear, light blue sky. The text is centered over the image.

First Steps to Developing a wetland program

A landscape photograph showing a vast wetland area in the foreground, filled with tall, golden-brown grasses. In the background, a range of mountains stretches across the horizon under a clear, light blue sky. The text is overlaid on the middle of the image.

**Starting to Think about Developing a Tribal
Wetlands Program?**

Tribes play a critical role in the protection and management of our Nation's wetlands

- Increased roles in wetlands protection and management by adopting any of a number of wetlands programs or tools. Components of comprehensive wetlands programs which various States and Tribes have adopted include:
 - assuming the federal Clean Water Act Section 404 permit program or obtaining State Program General Permits from the Corps of Engineers
 - undertaking comprehensive Tribal Wetland Conservation Plans which identify strengths and needs in a state's program, and often develop the framework for a state's wetlands program
 - developing narrative wetland water quality standards
 - applying the Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification program
 - adopting non-regulatory programs such as watershed/wetlands planning initiatives, taxation programs, acquisition programs, and others
 - incorporating wetlands considerations into other water programs.

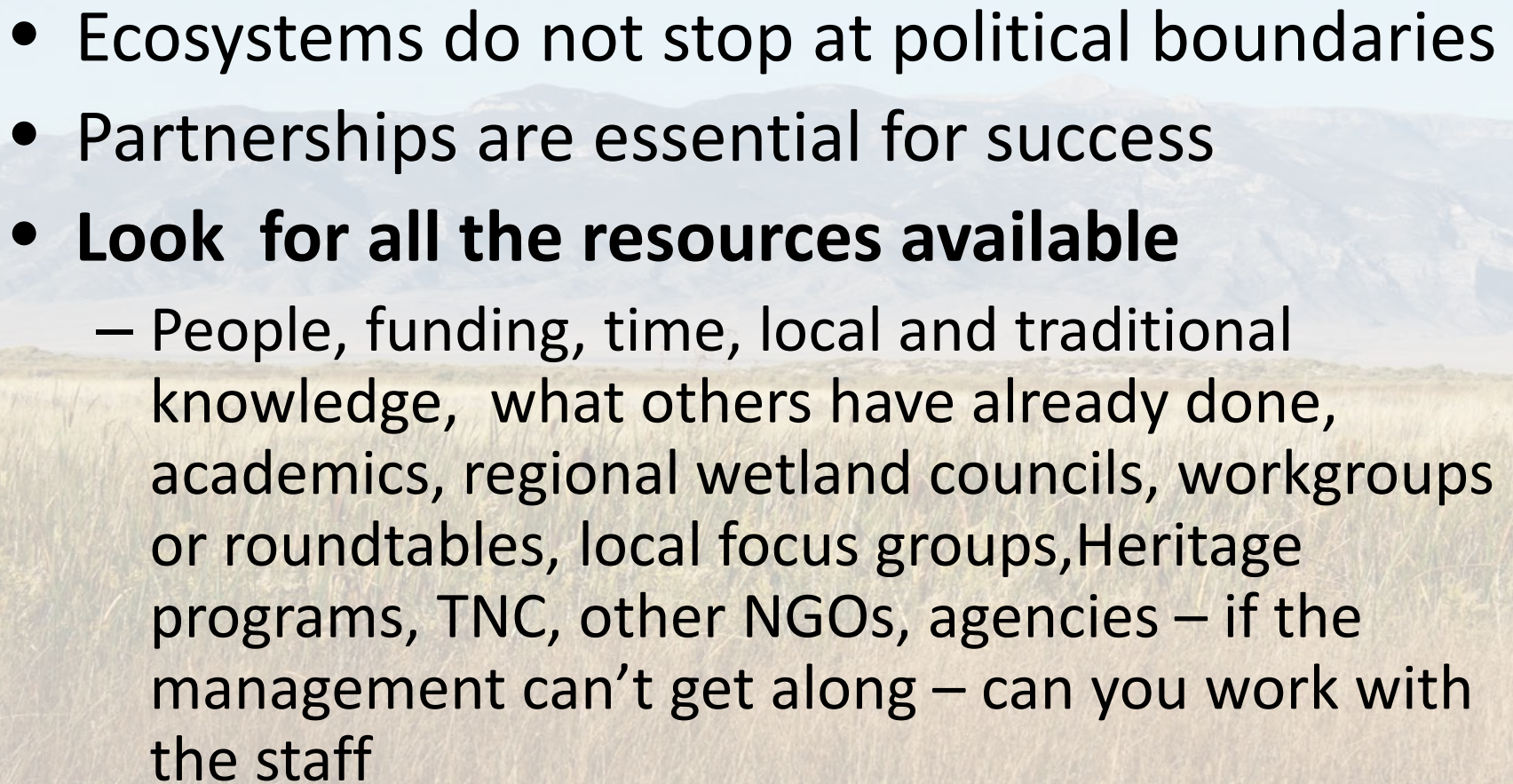
Wetland Program General Information

- **Enhanced State and Tribal Program (ESTP) Initiative** The goal of the Enhancing State and Tribal Programs (ESTP) Initiative is to enhance EPA's delivery of technical and financial support for state and tribal wetlands programs, with the goal of accelerating program development.
[Enhancing State and Tribal Wetland Programs Initiative](#) | [PDF Version](#) (5 pp, 102K)
- **State and Tribal Wetland Program Plans**
Wetland Program Plans (WPPs) are voluntary plans developed and implemented by state agencies and tribes which articulate what these entities want to accomplish with their wetland programs over time. WPPs describe overall program goals along with broad-based actions and more specific activities that will help achieve the goals. Please go to EPA's Wetland Program Page to peruse EPA-approved [Wetland Program Plans](#).
- **Core Elements of Wetland Programs**
Starting to think about developing a wetlands program, the Core Element Framework is a good place to start. The program building activities listed in the Core Elements Framework are based on the collective knowledge of wetland specialists and the experience of state and tribes that have developed state or tribal wetland programs.
http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/wetlands/cefintro.cfm

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- **WHO will be a part of the program, steering committee, technical advisors**
 - **Water Quality staff**
 - **Fish and Game**
 - **Federal Agencies: FWS, BLM, BIA, USFS**
 - **Water Resources**
 - **Business Council**
 - **NGOs**
 - **Watershed groups, Area focus groups**
 - **Landowners, allottees**

First Steps

- WHY develop a wetland program
- WHO will be a part of the program
- HOW –resources: people, money and time
- WHAT and WHERE
 - Priorities
 - Inventory

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- The background of the slide is a photograph of a vast, open landscape. In the foreground, there is a field of tall, dry, golden-brown grasses. In the middle ground, there are rolling hills and a range of mountains under a clear, light blue sky. The overall scene is bright and natural, suggesting an outdoor or environmental setting.
- Ecosystems do not stop at political boundaries
 - Partnerships are essential for success
 - **Look for all the resources available**
 - People, funding, time, local and traditional knowledge, what others have already done, academics, regional wetland councils, workgroups or roundtables, local focus groups, Heritage programs, TNC, other NGOs, agencies – if the management can't get along – can you work with the staff

WHY develop a wetland program

Each Tribe, each agency will have their own reasons

It is important that the program is tailored to fit the landscape, the type of wetlands, the Tribe, the knowledge and skills of the staff both now and those in future plans.

Use other plans and programs as examples but your program needs to fit your needs

Program Building Activities Menu

Core Element Framework

The following actions outline how a tribe can engage in developing, implementing, and using a monitoring and assessment strategy to meet its program objectives. These actions are universal to any wetland assessment program, including those that use both functional or condition assessments

Most common

- Wetland Program Strategy – overarching
- Wetland Program Plans
- Addressing Core Elements
 - Voluntary Restoration
 - Regulation (401 and aquatic protection ordinances)
 - Water Quality Standards
 - Monitoring and Assessment

Actions †

Menu of Activities †

a. Identify program decisions and long-term environmental outcome(s) that will benefit from a wetlands monitoring and assessment program

- Document program's long-term environmental goals
- Identify programs that will ultimately use monitoring data, e.g. track trends, 401 certification, restoration, permitting
- Collaborate with water quality programs in a state/tribe
- Identify how wetland data can be used to implement watershed planning

b. Define wetlands monitoring objectives and strategies

- **Coordinate with most relevant partners**, for example: federal, state, tribal, and local agencies, universities, regional and national work groups
- Examine other sources for monitoring information within the state or tribe
- Identify monitoring objectives
- Define data needs and uses
- Coordinate with your state/tribe's Water Quality Monitoring Program to identify shared goals and activities
- Examine how to integrate wetlands monitoring strategy into existing water quality monitoring efforts as feasible
- Document wetlands monitoring strategy

c. Develop monitoring design, or an approach and rationale for site selection that best serves monitoring objectives (e.g., census, probabilistic survey, rotating basin)

- Determine classification scheme in order to group the type, class, and size of wetlands
- Describe site selection process
- List universe of wetland resources from which sites could be selected if available
- Determine which data are already available.

d. Select a core set of indicators to represent wetland condition or a suite of functions

- Identify indicators that are relevant for established monitoring objectives
- Confirm indicators are scientifically defensible
- Develop/select field method(s)
- Add supplemental indicators if needs dictate and as resources allow

Region 8 ESTP Implementation Plan

- ❖ Goal 1: Provide effective and prioritized technical assistance to states and tribes to implement WPP's or to develop WPPs***
- ❖ Goal 2: Track and document the progress and the results of state/tribal wetland programs***
- ❖ Goal 3: Effectively communicate the success of state and tribal wetland programs***
- ❖ Goal 4: Use the ESTP program to improve the effectiveness of the Regional Wetland Program in achieving environmental outcomes***

WPP

The purpose of asking for these Plans is to encourage States and Tribes to focus their wetland protection and restoration work, plan their program's course towards achieving their goals, and communicate their intent and needs to EPA.

In addition, the Wetland Program Plans should help increase communication between States and

Tribes and EPA. Plans can also help garner more support from within a State or Tribe for its wetland program.

Finally, Plans will enable EPA to more effectively develop, target, and deliver technical and other assistance to help States and Tribes achieve their wetland program goals.

WPPs and Core Elements

Plans should reflect the State's or Tribe's particular interests in moving their wetland protection program forward.

It is an opportunity for the State or Tribe to tell EPA where they choose to focus their wetland protection work.

Actions listed in a Plan should be consistent with the actions in the relevant core elements chapter of the CEF (see individual core element tables at

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/initiative/cefintro.html>).

Plans should reference the part of the CEF that most closely relates to the proposed actions.

Region 8 Required elements

1. Does Plan include overall Goal Statement for program?
2. Is Goal Statement time period same as timeframe for Plan?
3. Is Plan timeframe between minimum of 3 years and maximum of 6 years?
4. Is Plan timeframe between minimum of 3 years and maximum of 6 years?
5. Is Plan timeframe between minimum of 3 years and maximum of 6 years?
6. Is Plan timeframe between minimum of 3 years and maximum of 6 years?
7. Does Plan include intended schedule for achievement of each action [dependent upon resources being available]
8. Does Plan include intended schedule for achievement of each action [dependent upon resources being available]
9. At least one core element is addressed. Does the Plan reference the part of the CEF that most closely relates to the proposed actions?
10. Tribal government commitment

Region 8 Optional Review Questions

- What is the State's or Tribe's focus for moving their wetland protection program forward?
- Is this review for an existing Strategy with portions identified that address the minimum components of a Wetland Program Plan?
- Does plan refer to both wetland program development and implementation work for upcoming 3-6 years?
- Are wetland actions, to be supported with anticipated funds other than WPDGs, included in Plan?
- Is this a coordinated multi-agency and/or multi-partner Plan?
- Is the Plan publicly available? Does the State or Tribe understand approved plans must be posted on EPA's website to qualify for WPDG status
- Does the Plan clearly communicate intent and needs to wetland program partners (internal within S/T), both existing and potential?
- Does the Plan clearly communicate intent and needs to EPA (external to S/T)?
- Is there an introductory paragraph providing background information on the State's or Tribe's wetland resources?
- Are there photos providing general picture/range of State or Tribal wetland?
- Does Plan include specific technical and/or programmatic assistance needs?
- Does the Plan identify individual Clean Water Act Programs that may integrate with the wetland plan?

Region 8 Wetlands and Related Habitats

- [Wet meadows](#)
- [Prairie potholes](#)
- [Playas](#)
- [Fens](#)
- [Seeps and springs](#)
- [Headwaters](#)
- [Riparian wetlands](#)
- [Fringe wetlands](#)
- [Mudflats and salt flats](#)



Publically available

- **Plans are publicly available so that others may benefit from the State's or Tribe's experience. Sharing the Plans will also allow potential partners, such as local governments and universities, to understand a State's or Tribe's wetland program objectives and enable them to better assist the State or Tribe to achieve its goals.**



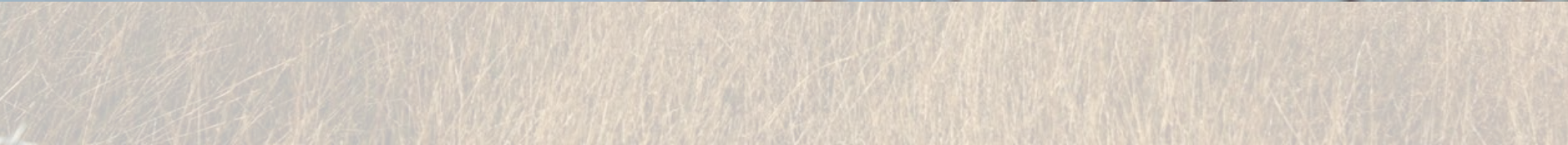
GLOBALLY IMPORTANT BIRD AREA


This site is part of a global network of places
recognized for their outstanding
value to bird conservation.



Audubon





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- Region 8 hoping to develop a Tribal wetland council to assist our tribes by providing leadership, direction, mentoring, guiding us in determining the training that is needed, hosting meetings ...

LINKS

- <http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/wpp.cfm>
- http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/wetlands/upload/2003_07_01_wetlands_tribalprogram_append2.pdf
- http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/wetlands/cefintro.cfm
http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/wetlands/startnewprogram.cfm
- <http://www2.epa.gov/region8/region-8-wetlands>
- <http://www2.epa.gov/region8/water-quality-certification-tribal-waters>

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- [Association of State Wetland Managers](#)
 - [Association of State Floodplain Managers](#)
 - [Tribal American Indian Environmental Office Tribal Contacts](#)
 - [National Association of Counties](#)
 - [International City/County Managers Association Wetlands and Watershed Management Program](#)
 - [Izaak Walton League of America Wetlands Project](#)
 - [League of Women Voters Wetlands Citizen Education Program](#)
 - [Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation \(PARC\)](#)
 - [Center for Watershed Protection](#)
 - [Wildlife Habitat Council Wildlife Management Tools](#)

