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**Project title:** Wetland Mapping Standard Implementation, Outreach and Training Materials

### **Interim Report**

**Organization:** Conservation Management Institute at Virginia Tech, 1900 Kraft Dr. Suite 250 Blacksburg VA, 24061, <http://cmi.vt.edu/>

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### **Collaborating Organizations:**

- Jane Awl Consulting, Jane Awl, Knoxville, TN, [janeawlconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:janeawlconsulting@gmail.com)
- Virginia Tech, Dr. John M. Galbraith, Assoc. Professor of Soil Science, Wetland Science, and GIS, Blacksburg, VA, [tacf@vt.edu](mailto:tacf@vt.edu)
- Wetland Mapping Consortium, <http://clic.cses.vt.edu/WMC/>

### **Executive Summary**

The Conservation Management Institute and Jane Awl Consulting are working with members of the affected wetlands science community to develop and vet technical guidance for creating wetland site names and other stable unique identifiers applicable to national-scale wetland tracking and monitoring needs. This information will be presented at relevant national and regional professional meetings to provide a final report with implementation recommendations. The technical guidance and implementation recommendations resulting from this project will be used to update the implementation plan, training materials, and outreach materials for the Wetlands Mapping Standard (<http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/documents/gNSDI/DRAFTImplementationPlanFGDCWetlandsMappingStandard.pdf>), and made available through the Wetland Mapping Consortium and the Association of State Wetland Managers web pages.

### **Project Narrative**

We have completed the first major milestone by holding a webinar with sixteen attendees, “**Development of Technical Guidance on Site Names and Other Unique Identifiers for Mapping and Monitoring Wetlands**”, July 13, 2011, to inform the stakeholders of the project and begin the process of soliciting input. Work is ongoing with the request for information (RFI), and direct contact with stakeholders continues. Input has been received from representatives from Federal and State agencies as well as several interested NGOs. Based on the comments received we are developing a draft template of the guidance for presentation at several conferences in the coming months.

The only obstacle encountered so far has been the cancelation or rescheduling of conferences due to a lack of funding across all levels of private and government organizations. These changes caused us to amend our project schedule. The National Aquatic Resource Surveys Workshop and Training, which was scheduled for October 2011, would have been the first major opportunity to formally present the project at a conference, but has been rescheduled to the spring of 2012. Other conferences have had similar changes making scheduling and planning

difficult. However, the conference dates are starting to finalize and we anticipate no significant problems presenting at the conferences as planned, only at later dates than anticipated.

To account for the changes in schedule we plan to hold an additional webinar over the intervening period to continue the RFI and develop the draft by early 2012. We will then use the conferences as an opportunity to present the template and solicit comments on the plan.

### **Next Steps**

*Will this project's activities continue after the performance period?*

We do anticipate the project's activities will continue after the performance period. The guidance and training provided through this project require further review and discussion before any implementation.

*What formal or informal organizational relationships have been established to sustain activities beyond performance period?*

Many collaborative relationships have developed during the course of the project. All parties have shown an interest to continue working toward developing the formal recommendation.

These groups include, but are not limited to:

- Association of State Wetland Managers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Wetland Mapping Consortium
- Ducks Unlimited
- State Agencies (Including KY, GA, DE, MT, MD, and FL)

*Describe the next phase in your project.*

The next phase of the project will be to develop a draft template of the proposed guidance. We will hold an additional webinar this winter and present the plan at conferences this spring. Our current conference schedule is as follows:

- Soil Science Society of America, October 2011
- Mid-Atlantic Hydric Soils meeting, January 2012
- State/Tribal/Federal Wetlands Coordination Meeting, Spring 2012
- National Aquatic Resource Surveys Workshop and Training, Spring 2012 (to be held in conjunction with the National Water Quality Monitoring Council)
- Society of Wetland Scientists, Spring 2012

*Requirements (more technical assistance, software, other?)*

No additional assistance is needed at this time.

*What other areas need work?*

Fewer conference opportunities are available this fall than anticipated. We will continue to solicit input directly from interested parties and continue to provide venues for input and the dissemination of information.

*What do you anticipate for future FGDC-endorsed standards training and outreach after the project performance period ends?*

We anticipate that interested parties will implement the guidance through small projects and pilot studies to determine the efficacy of the plan and identify any additional changes required.