

Wetland Assessment in Region III

EPA Region III

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Wetlands

- Lands where saturation with water is the dominant factor determining the nature of soil development and the types of plant and animal communities living in the soil and on its surface (Cowardin, December 1979).
- Vary widely because of regional and local differences in soils, topography, climate, hydrology, water chemistry, vegetation, and other factors, including human disturbance.
- Are considered waters of the US
- Are protected under section(s) 303, 401, 404, etc. of the CWA

Water Quality Assessments in Region III

- Wetlands are rarely assessed
- Mentioned only in passing in 305(b) reports
- Rationale: hard to quantify impairment
- No successful tools/ guidance available to assist in wetlands monitoring

Wetlands Modules

- Developed to assist states and tribes in assessing biological and nutrient conditions of wetlands
- Provide methods to evaluate:
 - (1) the overall condition of wetlands using biological assessments
 - (2) nutrient enrichment of wetlands, which one of the primary stressors damaging wetlands in many parts of the country