

TECHNICAL REPORT TITLE PAGE

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Evaluation of the Iowa Department of
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Mitigation Program

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5. AUTHOR(S)

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7. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COOPERATING ORGANIZATIONS/INDIVIDUALS

8. ABSTRACT

The purpose of this investigation was to evaluate the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Program at the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) in terms of regulatory compliance. Specific objectives included:

- 1) Determining if study sites meet the definition of a jurisdictional wetland.
- 2) Determining the degree of compliance with requirements specified in Clean Water Act Section 404 permits.

A total of 24 study sites, in four age classes were randomly selected from over 80 sites currently managed by the Iowa DOT. Wetland boundaries were delineated in the field and mitigation compliance was determined by comparing the delineated wetland acreage at each study site to the total wetland acreage requirements specified in individual CWA Section 404 permits.

Of the 24 sites evaluated in this study, 58 percent meet or exceed Section 404 permit requirements. Net gain ranged from 0.19 acre to 27.2 acres. Net loss ranged from 0.2 acre to 14.6 acres. The Denver Bypass 1 site was the worst performer, with zero acres of wetland present on the site and the Akron Wetland Mitigation Site was the best performer with slightly more than 27 acres over the permit requirement.

Five of the ten under-performing sites are more than five years post construction, two are five years post construction, one is three years post construction and the remaining two are one year post construction. Of the sites that meet or exceed permit requirements, approximately 93 percent are five years or less post construction and approximately 43 percent are only one year old. Only one of the 14 successful sites is more than five years old.

Using Section 404 permit acreage requirements as the criteria for measuring success, 58 percent of the wetland mitigation sites investigated as part of this study are successful. Using net gain/loss as the measure of success, the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Program has been successful in creating/restoring nearly 44 acres of wetland over what was required by permits.

9. KEY WORDS

wetlands, environmental, mitigation, legal

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