

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Association of State Wetland Managers, Inc.



Photo by Robert P. Brooks

*It is not enough to understand the natural world;
the point is to defend and preserve it.*

- Edward Abbey

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Photo by William Dooley, ASWM

In 2020, ASWM projects were supported by the McKnight Foundation, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Land Management, and Utah State University, along with members and private donors. The Association would like to express its gratitude to those who have supported its efforts to protect the nation's wetlands through the application of sound science, training and education.

Thank you.

FEDERAL GRANT PROJECTS

Despite the COVID-19 global pandemic that crippled organizations and government agencies starting in early 2020, ASWM still had a very productive year.



Photo by William Dooley, ASWM

Urban Wetlands: Supporting and Sustaining a Healthy and Safe Urban Environment

This two-year EPA Wetland Program Development Grant was awarded on April 26, 2019. The original project period was originally to run from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2020. A no-cost extension request for this grant was awarded to extend the grant deadline to March 31, 2021. The primary goal of this project is to identify ways to enhance, protect and restore wetlands within and surrounding urban areas to maximize economic, ecological, and social benefits for urban communities. The project is designed to increase urban wetland protection and restoration through greater state, tribal, and local program capacity building and greater public knowledge of the critical role urban wetlands play in making urban communities more sustainable and better places to live.

At the outset of the project, ASWM formed a national project workgroup to advise and inform project tasks and findings. The national project workgroup was formed to provide expertise on a wide range of topics important to urban wetlands, as well as provide representative geographic distribution, and perspectives from federal, state, and local levels of government.

Numerous challenges were identified during the project with the way Wetland Program Plans address and manage urban wetlands. From these observations five recommendations were identified addressing the biggest barriers and gaps in the Core Elements Framework (CEF) related to urban wetland specific issues. ASWM identified, researched, and discussed the benefits and limitations of existing geospatial mapping and prioritization tools at various spatial scales including federal, state, county, and local. And through research and workgroup discussions, ASWM facilitated peer-to-peer sharing on cost-benefit techniques, the potential to expand the use of crediting system in urban settings, and opportunities around under leveraged funding mechanisms. ASWM worked to identify pilot projects where urban communities have realized multiple, co-benefits by protecting, restoring, enhancing and/or creating wetlands.



Photo by Jim Pendergast, EPA Retired

Strengthening Opportunities for State Assumption of the Section 404 Dredge and Fill Program

This two-year EPA Wetland Program Development Grant was awarded on April 26, 2019. The project period ran from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2020, with a formal extension request awarded to extend the project period until March 31, 2021. The primary goals of this project are to: 1) encourage the development of complete assumption packages that meet program requirements; 2) allow states and tribes to capitalize on the work and success of other states; 3) help states plan sustainable funding strategies for assuming the §404 Program; and 4) expand the resources available to states and tribes interested in assumption.

ASWM formed a national project workgroup to advise and inform project tasks and findings. ASWM invited representatives across the nation to serve on the workgroup. A total of 33 representatives participated, including 18 states. Other representatives included a tribe, two regional EPA staff from regions with states considering assumption, a consultant, a mitigation bank representative, and EPA headquarters staff. The workgroup also included ASWM staff.

In the first year of the national dialogues, GoogleForms sent out in January 2020 made it possible for states and tribes not in the workgroup to ask questions for consideration during the project and by webinar presenters, as well as identify resources they would like included in the peer-to-peer sharing element of the project. This online national dialogue process then moved to monthly GoToMeeting-based dialogues with topic-targeted 45-minute national discussions following workgroup calls, engaging all interested parties (broader than just workgroup members, though many joined the formal workgroup as the project progressed).

In 2020, ASWM also planned, organized, promoted, hosted, moderated, recorded, post-processed and shared 5 of the 8 planned assumption webinars as part of this grant:

- 1) February 18, 2020 - Assumption 101: Introduction to Assuming the CWA Section 404 Program.
- 2) June 17, 2020 - Data Management for Assumption of the 404 Program.
- 3) September 23, 2020 – Mitigation Banking Considerations for States and Tribes Exploring Assumption of the Clean Water Act Section 404 Program.
- 4) November 4, 2020 - Florida's Assumption Process: Planning, Decisions and Lessons Learned.
- 5) December 6, 2020 – Documenting Assumable Waters for Assumption of the Clean Water Act § 404 Program.



Photo by Andrew Robertson, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

Enhancing State and Tribal Roles in Wetland Protection through Regulatory Program Capacity Building

This two-year EPA Wetland Program Development Grant was awarded on April 25, 2019. The project period ran from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2020, with a formal extension request awarded to extend the project period until March 31, 2021. The primary goal of this project is to collect, share and support the adoption of successful capacity building efforts designed to build state and tribal wetland regulatory programs, whether through strengthened §401 certification programs, the development of dredge and fill programs, or improving the capacity of specific elements of existing dredge and fill programs. Focusing on meeting states and tribes “where they are,” products for this project will be designed to emphasize a range of options.

In 2020, ASWM also planned, organized, promoted, hosted, moderated, recorded, post-processed and shared 7 of the 8 planned assumption webinars as part of this grant:

- 1) February 21, 2020: Introduction to Wetland Program Plans (WPPs).
- 2) March 24, 2020: Sharing EPA’s “Refresh” to the Enhancing State and Tribal Programs (ESTP) Framework.
- 3) June 24, 2020: Building Capacity to Protect and Manage Wetlands through the Development of State Wetland Associations.
- 4) August 20, 2020: Communications Strategies and Lessons Learned for Wetland Programs.
- 5) September 16, 2020: Conducting State/Tribal Review of the 2020 Nationwide Permits.
- 6) September 29, 2020: Improving Enforcement in Wetland Regulatory Programs:
- 7) November 13, 2020: Filling Wetland Regulatory Gaps: Approaches and Lessons Learned.

Our Vision...

As a result of ASWM’s work, the wetland community has access to and effectively uses sound science, policy, and private/public partnerships to preserve, protect, and restore the nation’s precious and limited wetlands and related aquatic resources.



Photo by Laura Burchill, ASWM

National Wetlands Inventory Educational Webinars, Outreach, and Advancement of Functional Assessment Methodologies

In August of 2020, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Inventory awarded ASWM a one-year contract to provide 7 educational webinars and a functional assessment workshop. In 2020, 3 of the 7 webinars were planned, organized, hosted, recorded, post-processed, and posted on ASWM's website, including:

- 1) February 12, 2020: NWI Unfinished Business: The Current State of Wetland Mapping in Alaska.
- 2) October 7, 2020: Automating the Detection of Disturbances to Aquatic Resources.
- 3) December 8, 2020: Mapping a Path to Wetland Functions: Leveraging NHD and LLWW.

ASWM also established a national steering committee to help plan a two-day virtual workshop to be held in 2021 on Federal Landscape Scale Wetland Functional Assessment. Identified in collaboration with multiple federal agency partners, the goal of the workshop is to develop a federal community of practice around landscape scale wetland functional assessment to highlight current federal activities and to identify future needs and opportunities. The workshop is scheduled to be held online on May 25-26, 2021.



Photo by Robert Jones

An Ecological Framework for Compensatory Mitigation

In 2018, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) contracted with the Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) to develop a webinar training series with topics that go beyond what is currently available at the National Interagency Review Team course or in Corps Regulatory Mitigation Workshops. The purpose of the contract between the Corps and ASWM was to develop and provide advanced training materials for current and future Corps regulatory staff engaged in reviewing, approving and monitoring compensatory mitigation. However, the audience also included other people who are working with or running compensatory mitigation programs such as state agency staff, etc. There are 9 recorded webinars with an average of 3 presentations in each for this series that build on the information from each preceding webinar. Content for the modules was developed through the planning, delivery, recording and post-processing of the webinars. Using recordings from each webinar, ASWM developed complete modules, including learning objectives and test questions for each module.

In 2020, the final webinar in this series was held:

- February 20, 2020: An Ecological Framework for Reviewing Compensatory Mitigation: How interests in property may affect mitigation projects



Beaver as a Riparian Restoration Partner in the Western U.S.

In late 2018, ASWM partnered with the Bureau of Land Management to develop a webinar series on “Beaver as a Riparian Restoration Partner in the Western U.S.” Although there are many examples of beaver reintroduction success, models and case studies, prior to the webinar series, this information had not been shared widely. The webinar series was planned by a national workgroup of beaver restoration experts and webinars are presented by expert practitioners, managers and researchers working in the field. In March of 2019, the first beaver workgroup call was held. After holding monthly workgroup calls throughout the summer, a beaver webinars series plan was finalized and the first of a series of 6 webinars planned was held in March of 2020.

The webinars held in 2020 included:

- 1) March 11, 2020: The History of Beaver and the Ecosystem Services They Provide
- 2) September 24, 2020: Identifying Where to Place Beavers and When to Use Beaver Mimicry for Low Tech Restoration in the Arid West
- 3) October 13, 2020: Case Studies of Long-term Changes for Beaver Restoration Activities
- 4) December 10, 2020: Addressing Common Barriers and Objections to Beaver Restoration Work

Our Mission...

The Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) is a nonprofit organization established in 1983 to promote and enhance protection and management of wetland resources, to promote application of sound science to wetland management efforts and to provide training and education for our members and the public. Membership is open to all.

SPECIAL PROJECT

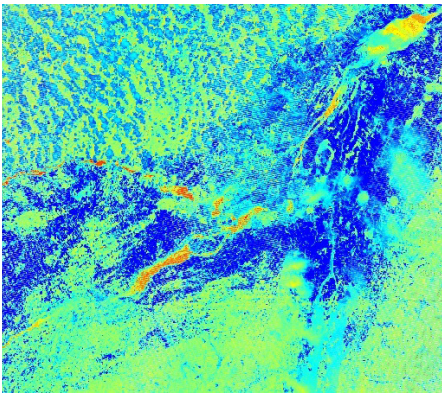


Wikimedia Commons Photo by Cheryl Reynolds, Courtesy of Worth a Dam

Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration of Riverscapes Virtual Workshop

ASWM was contracted by the Utah State University to assist with the planning and execution of a four day virtual workshop from August 11 – 14, 2020. ASWM staff worked directly with Dr. Joe Wheaton, Associate Professor, and his team on workshop pre-planning, coordination, and logistics, and provided facilitation and administrative support for all four days. Collectively, participants were located across 5 countries and 38 U.S. states with nearly 1,000 participants engaged each day.

COLLABORATIONS



Wetland Mapping Consortium

ASWM is a founding member of the Wetland Mapping Consortium (WMC). The WMC is an interdisciplinary group of wetland scientists and managers interested in mapping and monitoring wetlands using remote sensing and/or using the resultant products to better manage wetland resources. The consortium fosters collaborations and disseminates data and findings for the purpose of enhanced wetland mapping and monitoring.



Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance

The Association of State Wetland Managers is a founding member of the Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance (NFFA). The Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance (NFFA) is an affiliation of nonprofit and private organizations, government agencies and individuals dedicated to the protection and preservation of the natural functions of floodplains, including coastal areas. ASWM maintains an NFFA webpage on its website devoted to NFFA activities. In 2018 NFFA held five webinars on topics such as “Reaching Across the Border to Improve Water Supplies for People and Nature: The United States, Mexico, and the Colorado River,” “Green Infrastructure Resources for Coastal Flood Risk Management,” “Wetlands by Design: A Watershed Approach for Wisconsin,” “Floodplain Policies for Flood Survivors - A Conversation,” and “Green Infrastructure Case Studies: How to Successfully Lower Risk in Your Community”. Through NFFA, ASWM hosted three webinars and the Association of State Floodplain Managers hosted the other two. All were recorded and are available to the general public.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Association of State Wetland Managers works with other organizations on education, training, clean water advocacy and other wetlands-related issues. ASWM has worked with its partners in recent years toward a common goal of protecting wetlands and water resources through sound science and sensible public policy. ASWM is a membership organization; membership is open to anyone.

State Wetland Managers

ASWM has members who are State Wetland Managers from 38 states.

State Associations & Organizations

Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA)
Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)
Association of State Floodplain Managers (ASFPM)
Coastal States Organization (CSO)
Environmental Council of the States (ECOS)
Groundwater Protection Council (GWPC)

Foundations

Horne Family Foundation
McKnight Foundation
Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation

Non-profits & Academic Institutions

American Institute of Biological Sciences
American Planning Association
American Rivers
Center for Wetlands & Stream Restoration
Ducks Unlimited
Environmental Law Institute
Kenyon College
Louisiana State University
Michigan Wetlands Association
Midwest Biodiversity Institute
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District
Muskie School of Public Service
(University of Southern Maine)
National Wildlife Federation
Pennsylvania State University & Riparia
Prairie River Network
Ramsar U.S.
Restore America's Estuaries
River Network

Saint Mary's University of Minnesota
Society of Wetland Scientists
Southern California Coastal Water Research Project
Southern Illinois University
Stetson University College of Law
SUNY Buffalo Law School
The Nature Conservancy
The Pew Charitable Trusts
The Water Institute of the Gulf
The Wetland Conservancy
Union of Concerned Scientists
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Utah State University
Virginia Tech
Wisconsin Wetlands Association

Federal Agencies

Federal Emergency Management Agency
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Department of Agriculture
- APHIS
- Forest Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- National Wetlands Inventory Coastal Program
U.S. Geological Survey



Photo by Sharon Weaver, ASWM

STUDIES/REPORTS/TOOLS PUBLISHED



ASWM Insights on the Final WOTUS Rule: The 2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule

On April 21, 2020, the US Environmental Protection Agency published the Navigable Waters Protection Rule in the Federal Register. The rule will come into effect on June 22, 2020. To help states and tribes better understand how the rule will change jurisdiction of Waters of the United States, ASWM has developed a document, entitled "ASWM Insights on the Final WOTUS Rule: The 2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule". This document includes key takeaways from the new rule, specific language and citations useful to wetland professionals and information about potential impacts for states and tribes, as well as early considerations around implementation. The document provides links to the rule and related resources.

Download the ASWM Insights on the Final WOTUS Rule document [here](#).

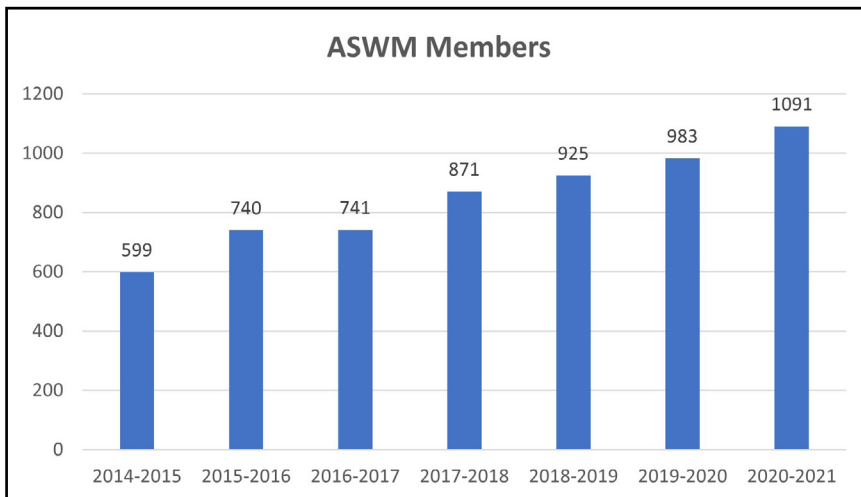
The National Dialogue Tool

Using GoogleForms, the National Dialogue tool was implemented and designed to allow state and tribal wetland program staff to participate and ask questions during ASWM's Assumption and Regulatory Capacity Building projects.



Photo by Marla J. Stelk, ASWM

ENGAGEMENT



ASWM Membership Development in 2020:

- In 2020 ASWM welcomed 371 new members
- Current number of members (November 2020): 1,091 members

ASWM Periodic Publications Ongoing in 2020:

- Wetland News Digest (monthly)
- State/Tribal Note (monthly)
- Wetland News (Bi-monthly)
- Insiders' Edition (weekly)



Social Media Outreach:

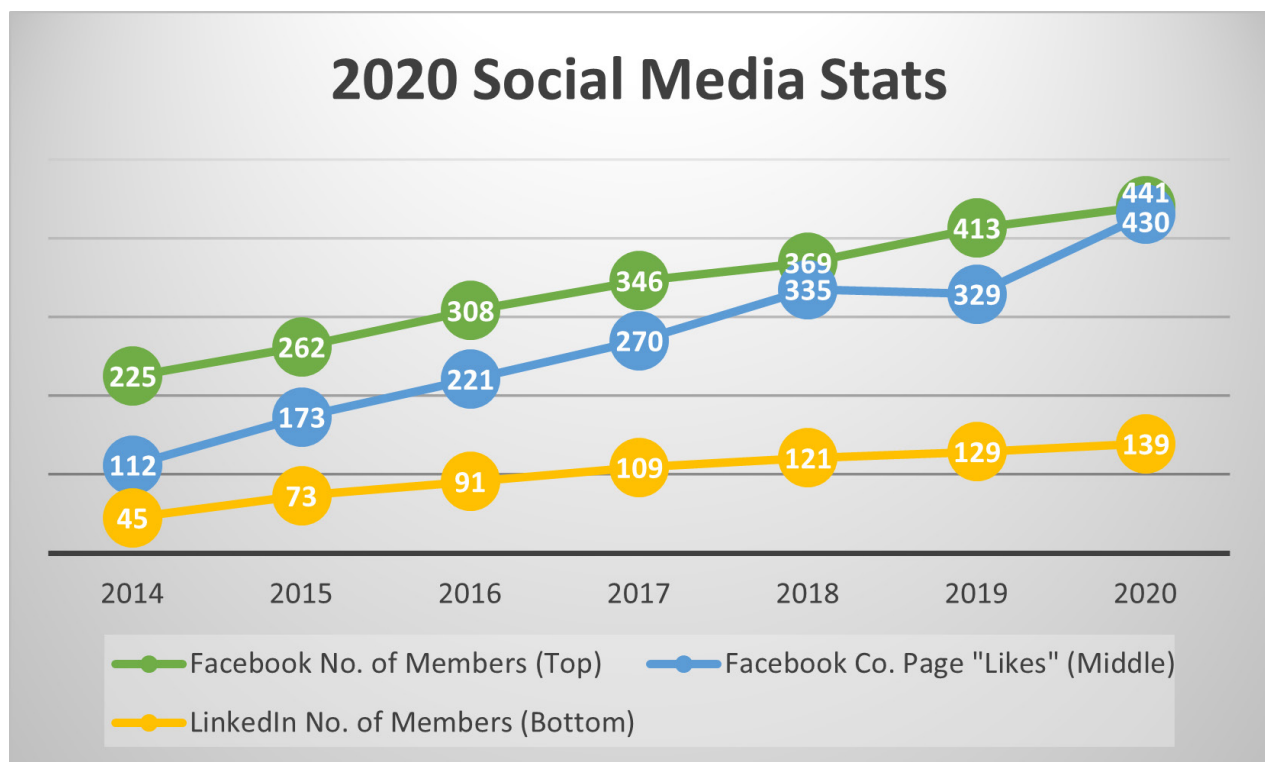




Photo by Marla J. Stelk, ASWM

ASWM Speaking Engagements/ Presentations in 2020

- National Mitigation and Ecosystem Banking Conference: Virtual
- Women in Conservation Leadership Summit 2020
- Delaware Wetlands Conference - Wilmington, DE
- The National Coastal and Estuarine Virtual Summit

Federal Policy Engagements

The Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) actively monitors many issues of concern to our members and provides comments on proposed policies and other actions when appropriate. ASWM will also occasionally sign onto group comment letters with other organizations and associations such as ACWA, ECOS, WSWC, ASFPM, and SWS. Comment letters submitted in 2020 include:

- November 16, 2020 – ASWM Comments on the Proposed Rule to Reissue Nationwide Permits
- November 30, 2020 – ASWM Provides Feedback on Priorities for the Biden-Harris Administration
- May 18, 2020 – ASWM Comments on Strengthening Transparency in Regulatory Science
- March 6, 2020 – ASWM Submits Comments on Updates to NEPA
- May 11, 2020 – ASWM Comments on FEMA Docket for Hazard Mitigation Assistance: Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities

ASWM's Policy Documents can be found [here](#).

*“Water must be thought of in terms of
the chains of life it supports.”*

- Rachel Carson

WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES



ASWM State/Tribal/Federal Coordination Meeting

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, ASWM cancelled the in-person annual meeting and moved to a two and a half-day virtual meeting. The topic of the Annual State/Tribal/Federal Coordination Meeting was “Building Wetland Program Capacity in an Everchanging Environment.” There were 148 attendees.

We had a total of 38 speakers (including panelists), 18 presentations and 3 panel discussions during our two and a half days of the meeting. Topics this year included: State, Tribal and Federal Program and Policy Updates; Wetland Program Capacity Building Tools and Case Studies; Restoration, Mitigation and Mapping; and Wetlands, Wildlife and Watersheds. Following the meeting, the agenda and PowerPoints were made available to participants.



EPA Region 9 Virtual ESTP Conference Nov. 17-19, 2020

ASWM helped plan, develop, host, and facilitate a 2.5 day virtual Enhancing State and Tribal Programs conference for EPA Region 9 from November 17 – 19, 2020 for over 181 attendees. The EPA Region 9 WPDG grantees for Fiscal Year 20-21 were required to set aside funds in their proposed budgets for an in-person meeting however due to the current pandemic, EPA opted for a virtual setting for the meeting. Like an in-person meeting, the virtual meeting/webinar format offered this cohort of grantees an opportunity to meet each other, discuss ideas with EPA staff and have questions answered/addressed. Time was set aside in the schedule for a brainstorming session to assist grantees that are interested in applying for the FY2022-2023 Wetland Program Development Grants.

WEBINARS

The Association of State Wetland Managers hosted a number of webinars in 2020 as part of ongoing projects to improve state wetland programs and to further the efforts of two collaborations: the Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance and the Wetland Mapping Consortium. ASWM utilizes webinars as a tool for communication and for reaching an audience that would not otherwise be able to travel to conferences or seminars. ASWM also hosts a monthly webinar series for members only. Topics alternate between science, policy and legal issues each month. ASWM also records and post-processes all webinars and they are available to view on the ASWM website. The 2020 webinar series are listed below.



Photo by William Dooley, ASWM

Members' Webinars

ASWM held nine Members' Webinars in 2020 with a total of 1,047 participants. Some of the topics covered were: In-Lieu Fee Mitigation, Coastal Wetlands, Wetland and Floodplain Restoration, Wetland Drainage, and Michigan's Web-based Permitting Tools.

Hot Topics Webinars

ASWM held four Hot Topic Webinars with a total of 1,362 participants. Webinar topics were:

- Importance of Wetlands in Floodplain Function and Ecosystem Services
- Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on State Wetland Programs and Early Adaptations
- Wetlands from the Nebraska Sandhills to Iowa's Restored Ag Lands
- Exploring the Nexus Between Wetlands, Agriculture, and Ecosystem Benefits

Compensatory Mitigation Webinars

In 2020 ASWM held the final Compensatory Mitigation Webinar. There were 271 participants.

EPA Region 10 Tribal Wetland Program Webinars

One webinar was held for the EPA Region 10 Tribal Wetland Program Series in 2020 with 263 participating. The topic was "Advancing Tribal Wetland Programs Through Innovations in Monitoring & Assessment."

Wetland Mapping Consortium (WMC) Webinars

This year ASWM held three WMC Webinars with a total of 676 participants. The topics were: Wetland Mapping in Alaska, Detection of Disturbances, and Leveraging NHD and LLWW to Enhance the NWI



Photo by Laura Burchill, ASWM

Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance (NFFA) Webinars

This year ASWM held two NFFA Webinars with a total of 604 participants. The topics were: Disaster Recovery Lessons Learned and The Geography of Risk.

Assumption Project Webinars

ASWM held five Assumption Webinars in 2020 with a total of 875 participants. The topics were: Assumption 101: An Introduction to Assuming the CWA Section 404 Program, Data Management, Mitigation Banking Considerations, Florida’s Assumption Process, Documenting Assumable Waters.

Beaver-related Restoration Webinars

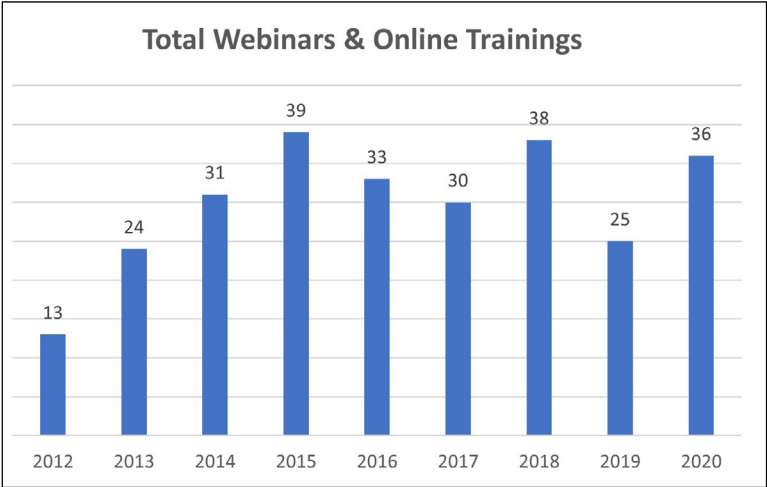
Four webinars were held for the Beaver-related Restoration project in 2020 with 2,508 participating. The topics were “The History of Beaver and the Ecosystem Services They Provide”, “Identifying Where to Place Beavers and When to Use Mimicry for Restoration”, “Case Studies of Long-term Changes from Beaver Restoration Activities”, “Addressing Common Barriers and Objections to Beaver Restoration Work”.

Wetland Regulatory Capacity Building Webinars

Seven webinars were held for the Wetland Regulatory Capacity Building project in 2020 with 1,704 participating. The topics were: EPA’s “Refresh”, Wetland Associations, Communications Strategies, Nationwide Permits, Enforcement, and Filling Wetland Regulatory Gaps.

Tribal Wetland Programs Webinars

ASWM held one Tribal Wetland Programs webinar in 2020 with 263 participants. The topic was: Advancing Tribal Wetland Programs Through Innovations in Monitoring & Assessment.



FINANCIAL REPORT

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Cash	628,649
Accounts Receivable, Net	10,788
Prepaid Expenses	<u>4,525</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$643,962

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	
Accrued Expenses	19,540
Other Liabilities	<u>79,780</u>
Total Liabilities	\$99,320
Net Assets	
Without Donor Restrictions	544,642
With Donor Restrictions	<u>0</u>
Total Net Assets	\$544,642
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$643,962

2020 AUDIT

An audit was performed by Purdy Powers & Company and the financial statements presented fairly.

REVENUES and OTHER SUPPORT

Grant Income	541,578
Contributions	3,648
Program Fees	39,637
Membership Dues	60,927
Sponsorships	5,500
Interest Income	2,301
In-kind	<u>0</u>
TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	\$653,591

EXPENSE

Compensation and Benefits	495,657
Program Expense	7,628
Occupancy	21,240
Travel Expense	4,568
Office Computers (IT)	25,369
Office Expenses	7,237
Bank Fees	2,441
Insurance	1,797
Professional Fees	14,145
Telephone	6,217
Miscellaneous	17,982
In-kind	<u>0</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$604,281

Increase in Net Assets	<u>49,310</u>
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	<u>495,332</u>
Net Assets at End of Year	\$544,642

The Association of State Wetland Managers is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nongovernmental organization.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers:



Mark Biddle, Chairman

Mark is a lead wetland scientist with more than 23 years of experience working for the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. Currently, Mark is housed within the Watershed Assessment Section, Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Program. Mark holds degrees in Natural Resource Management and Soil and Water Management and attended both Delaware State University and the University of Delaware. Residing in Dover, Delaware, Mark lives with his wife and two daughters. Mark enjoys his time with the family lab Gabby, and hopes that the future holds ample time for two of his other loves, hunting and fishing.



Jill Aspinwall, Vice Chairman

Jill Aspinwall has worked at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection since 2001. She has a background in watershed management, education and outreach, wetlands mitigation, ecosystem restoration, and policy. For the last five years, Jill has been working in the Office of Policy Implementation assisting in the development and implementation of New Jersey's land use regulations, including the Freshwater Wetland Protection Act Rules, Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules, and the Coastal Zone Management Rules. Jill manages the State's In-Lieu Fee Program and has also recently become the lead in the development and management of the New Jersey's Mitigation Banking Program. Jill currently serves as an ex-officio member of the Board of ASWM. She has a B.S. in Biology and Environmental Studies from Washington College, and an M.S. in Environmental Science from Rutgers/NJIT.



Lauren Driscoll, Treasurer

Lauren Driscoll is the manager of the wetlands program at the Washington State Department of Ecology, a position that she has held since 2005. She is responsible for ensuring statewide consistency in the implementation of 401 WQ certifications, technical assistance, and guidance for local wetland regulations. She is responsible for assisting and mentoring wetland technical staff statewide. She oversees the wetland compliance program and writes grants for wetland program activities. Since 2007 she has also served as the agency's wetland policy lead doing bill analyses and legislative briefings, tracking national issues, and providing guidance on local wetland ordinances and their implementation. Lauren specializes in wetland policy and mitigation options such as wetland banks, ILF and advance mitigation.

Lauren began work at Ecology in 1998 when she was hired to develop a wetland banking rule and establish the state's bank certification program. Before joining Ecology, Lauren worked for the Washington State Department of Transportation where she performed wetland studies on transportation projects statewide, designed mitigation sites, and participated in the development of the Washington Wetland Function Assessment model. Prior to that she worked for the two federal agencies: the US Forest Service doing trail work where she ran a pack string of mules; and the USFWS where she did Swampbuster work under the Farm Bill.

Lauren received her bachelor's in environmental studies from the Evergreen State College where she studied ecology, botany, organic agriculture and computer sciences. Lauren and her husband live in Yelm, Washington and they have two fledging adult children along with a dog and two indoor cats (who are enjoying their new patio.) She enjoys gardening, doodling, card making, hiking and any excuse to get outside.



Amy Lounds, Secretary

Amy manages the Field Operations Support Section in the Water Resources Division of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), which includes Michigan's Great Lakes, floodplains, dam safety, critical dune, high risk erosion area, coastal zone, enforcement, and wetlands, lakes, and streams (Section 404) programs. Previous to that, she served as the Wetlands, Lakes and Streams Unit Chief for close to a decade. Amy has worked for EGLE for over 20 years, during which time she also served as the statewide wetland policy specialist and the administrator of the wetland mitigation banking program. Prior to working for the MDEQ, Amy

worked for the Michigan Department of Transportation doing environmental reviews and permit applications for wetlands, inland lakes and streams, and floodplains. Amy has a Bachelor of Science in Zoology from Michigan State University and a Masters in Landscape Architecture and Conservation Biology and Ecosystem Management from the University of Michigan. Amy currently lives in Holt Michigan with her husband and two daughters, and enjoys spending time with her family and being outdoors.

Members At Large:



Stacia Bax - Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Stacia Bax is the Environmental Supervisor of the Stormwater and Certification Unit within the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Her unit includes 4 technical staff and implements the Section 401 Water Quality Certification Program, drafts renewals for approximately 40 Section 402 NPDES program master general permits (industrial stormwater, industrial process water, construction/land disturbance stormwater, and municipal stormwater), and implements aspects of the NPDES eReporting Rule. Stacia has nearly 20 years of experience with the department and has also worked with Section 319 Nonpoint Source grants, Water Quality Standards rulemaking, TMDL development, Montauk State Park as a seasonal naturalist, and fieldwork in the beautiful Ozarks of Southwest Missouri.

In her personal time, she enjoys spending time with her husband, daughter and son (and two dogs) hiking, camping, and kayaking as well as coaching NASP archery, leading Scouts BSA and Girl Scouts, and watching her daughter play volleyball. In her spare time, Stacia loves to read, cook and bake (pies are her favorite), explore new places, and craft fiber arts (knitting and crocheting namely, though she has a loom she would love to learn to weave on). She lives in Central Missouri.



Denise Clearwater - Maryland Department of the Environment

Denise Clearwater has worked in Maryland's wetland programs since 1986. She has a background in developing and implementing a regulatory wetland program; a mitigation program; policy development; and special projects for program improvement and grant management. She has represented the Wetlands and Waterways Program in the Maryland Department of the Environment on numerous interagency work groups for regulatory, wetland monitoring, restoration, and preservation and is the co-chair of the Chesapeake Bay Program Wetland Work Group. She is also serving as an ex-officio Board member of ASWM and is a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists. Denise

has a B.S. in zoology from the University of Maryland and an M.S. in wildlife management from Frostburg State College (now University).



Andrew Robertson - GeoSpatial Services at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

Andy Robertson is the Executive Director of GeoSpatial Services at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota. In this role, he is responsible for oversight and management of all GeoSpatial Services projects, activities and staff. GeoSpatial Services is engaged in a wide variety of projects across the Lower 48 and Alaska including wetland inventory; National Hydrography Dataset updates; spatial data development; and, natural resource condition assessments. Andy has a diverse background in spatial information systems, watershed planning, wetland inventory, forest management, environmental impact assessment, desktop and server system support and database administration. He is a Registered Professional Forest Technologist (Alberta, Canada) and has experience leading natural resource projects for both private sector companies and public agencies across Canada and the United States including the Department of Interior, United States Army Corp of Engineers, NOAA, and the Department of Agriculture. Andy has a Forest Technology Diploma from Sault College of Applied Technology in Ontario, Canada, a B.Sc. in Environmental Science from the University of Waterloo and has completed postgraduate work in forest management at the University of Toronto. He is also a steering committee member for the Wetland Mapping Consortium and is co-chair of the Alaska GeoSpatial Council Wetland Technical Group.



Bill Ryan - Oregon Department of State Lands

Bill Ryan is the Deputy Director at the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) leading the Aquatic Resources Management Program which is responsible for implementation of Oregon's Removal-Fill and Wetlands Conservation Laws. Prior to joining the DSL in June of 2010, Bill enjoyed 14 years at the Oregon Department of Transportation performing environmental compliance work including wetlands delineation and mitigation, mitigation banking, regulatory streamlining and process improvement. Bill started his professional career in Southern California in 1989 providing environmental planning and habitat restoration expertise for various planning and engineering firms. Bill has been a member of ASWM for nine years. He also serves on the Board of the Oregon Public Management Association which provides networking and low cost training opportunities for managers and aspiring managers in public service. Bill has an undergraduate degree in Geography/Ecosystems Management from UCLA and a master's in Biology from California State University, Fullerton. His master's thesis topic was a study of succession in the alluvial scrub plant community following flood events in the Santa Ana River, California. In his spare time Bill enjoys hiking, camping, travel, skiing, singing acapella madrigals with the Sherwood Renaissance Singers and reading a good book.



Mary Ann Tilton - New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

Mary Ann Tilton is the Assistant Wetlands Bureau Administrator with the State of New Hampshire, Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), Wetlands Bureau. She has been with NHDES for over 30 years in various management and supervisory positions. She helped develop the Wetlands Enforcement program and supervised wetlands compliance for 17 years. She has served as the Assistant Administrator since 2005 and oversees state wetlands rules development, program development, and wetlands permitting. She is the recipient of an EPA Merit Award (2019) for development of a Wetlands BMP, multi-year rules initiative, and development of stream crossing rules. She holds a BA degree in Botany and Zoology from Connecticut College, MS in Zoology from University of Rhode Island, and a JD from UNH Law School (formerly Franklin Pierce Law Center), and is a Professional Wetland Scientist (PWS) and member of the Society of Wetland Scientists. She lives with her family in Concord, NH and enjoys hiking in the White Mountains, skiing, and exploring arboretums.

ASWM STAFF

Marla J. Stelk, Executive Director

Marla is the Executive Director at the Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) where she has worked on wetland policy and management issues since 2013. Marla has over 25 years of experience working on wetland, water, and wildlife issues, climate change, environmental policy and research, land use planning, communications and organizational leadership. Marla has led research at ASWM on topics such as ecosystem service valuation for wetland restoration, the role of wetlands in floodplain and natural hazard management, wetlands and watershed health, wetland mapping and communications. Prior to coming to ASWM, Marla worked for a variety of environmental and social nonprofit organizations helping to build organizational capacity, manage projects and improve internal processes. Marla earned her MA in Community Planning and Development with a focus on Land Use and the Environment at the University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service and her BA in Environmental Issues from Colorado College.

Donna Downing, Senior Legal Policy Advisor

Donna Downing is the Senior Legal Policy Advisor at the Association of State Wetland Managers. Donna was the Jurisdiction Team Leader in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Wetlands, Oceans, and Watersheds from 2007-2020. Donna worked on a variety of issues at EPA, with a focus in recent years on the geographic scope of the Clean Water Act (CWA) in light of the U.S. Supreme Court decisions. She also served as EPA's staff lead for CWA section 401 water quality certification, and on wetland-related legal issues. Prior to joining EPA in 1998, Donna worked for the U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment and in private law practice. She has a BA magna cum laude from Harvard University, an MPP from the University of California at Berkeley, a JD cum laude from Georgetown University Law School, and an LLM in Environmental Law summa cum laude from George Washington University Law School. Donna has been an adjunct professor at George Washington University Law School since 1996, teaching environmental law. In what's left of her time, she moonlights as a professional potter and an unprofessional horse trainer. Donna also enjoys traveling and has traveled by reindeer sled in the Swedish Arctic, gone winter camping with dog sleds in Minnesota's Boundary Waters Wilderness Area, and bicycled the Burma Road in China.

Brenda Zollitsch, PhD, Policy Analyst

Brenda is a Policy Analyst at the Association of State Wetland Managers. Brenda's areas of expertise include water resource policy, stormwater management, collaborative environmental policy implementation, and most recently, climate adaptation. At ASWM, Brenda conducts research and policy analysis on wetland and stream issues, manages projects; designs, coordinates and evaluates training for wetland professionals; coordinates webinars; publishes reports, articles and blogs; helps develop communications guidance; and is involved in conference planning and making presentations on ASWM's work to a variety of audiences. Brenda recently completed a national status and trends/state summaries project analyzing 50 state wetland programs across the United States and a national stream identification, delineation and mitigation study. She currently leads projects focused on increasing access to high quality wetland training and improving energy permitting to protect wetlands. Brenda received her PhD in Public Policy from the University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service in 2012, focusing on environmental policy and collaborative environmental management. She has her double Master's degree from Boston University and her bachelor's degree from the University of Maine. Brenda has 25 years of organizational leadership experience and a strong background in academic and action research, facilitation, training and communications. Brenda is a Switzer Environmental Fellow and has been instrumental in developing regional approaches to stormwater management in the State of Maine.

William Dooley, Policy Analyst

William is the new Policy Analyst at the Association of State Wetland Managers. William assists in the design and implementation of policy and program research and analysis plans; assists in identifying, writing, and carrying out federal grants; facilitates various workgroups and ad hoc committees; coordinates

and hosts webinars; and identifies content for the ASWM webpages and publications. William has a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Assumption College and a Master of Public Policy with a concentration in Environmental Policy from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. William has 8 years of environmental work experience including field sampling, data review, and project management. William enjoys hiking and camping throughout New England with his wife Samantha and their dog August and playing cards with friends and family whenever possible.

Dawn Smith, Communications Specialist

Dawn works on multimedia projects, focusing on webinars and short videos. After working in the corporate world for several years, she is redirecting creative energies towards social media, documentaries and short film communication formats. A lifetime resident of Maine, she has an appreciation for the preservation of local heritage and natural treasures, primarily from behind the lens. Working with ASWM, she has gained a greater appreciation for the local and national efforts to preserve and rebuild the wetland ecosystems that are all around us.

Marti Northover, Bookkeeper

Marti was hired in October as the new bookkeeper. Marti has over 30 years of professional experience in accounting, logistics and advertising. Marti has an undergraduate degree in Geography from Framingham State University in Framingham, MA and masters degree in Environmental Science from Clark University in Worcester, MA. Professionally Marti has taught environment related courses at colleges in MA, was owner of an historic inn, worked as the Director of Accounting and HR at a logistic company in MA and a homeless shelter in ME. Six years ago Marti moved to Alfred, ME, where she lives with her husband Vernon, enjoying the lake life and her chickens, ducks and nice garden. Currently Marti is the Treasurer of the Parson's Memorial Library Board of Trustees and is an Associate Member of Alfred Conservation Commission.

Laura Burchill, Office Manager

Laura is the office manager in the Windham office and has been with the Association since 2004. She is responsible for maintaining the membership information; assisting with the many tasks involved in preparing for webinars and workshops, Association publications as well as general office duties. She has 30+ years experience in graphic design and also works part-time for *Parent & Family*, a local publication. She lives in Windham, Maine with her husband Dave and their canine companion Jay.

Sharon Weaver, Webmaster

Sharon is the Publications Specialist and Webmaster for the Association in the Berne, New York office, where she has worked for the past 20+ years. Along with general office tasks, she works on the layout and design of Association publications, reports, and brochures. She helps coordinate ASWM workshops and symposia. She manages the ASWM website, which includes daily updates and prepares and designs new webpages. When she is not entertaining company, she enjoys some alone time with her husband, Ken, and grown children Karla and Pieter. She adores her cat and three dogs, who complete the family nest.

Olin Jenner, Intern

Olin Jenner joined the Association of State Wetland Managers as an intern and will be working with the organization until the end of the year. Olin graduated from Colby-Sawyer College in 2015 with a degree in environmental science and a minor in history. From there he worked in local and state politics and joined the executive committee of Sierra Club Maine as a volunteer before starting graduate school at the University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service. Olin enjoys hiking, skiing, and canoeing on Maine's beautiful lakes and mountains.



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