Association of State Wetland Managers 2013 Annual Report

Association of State Wetland Managers

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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.

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

- Edward Abbey
In 2013 ASWM projects were supported by the McKnight Foundation, the Robert and Patricia Switzer Foundation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 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.
Special Projects

National Wetlands Inventory Success Stories & State Mapping Summaries

Identifying Best Practices for Developing Wetland Restoration and Protection Programs:

Leveraging Adaptation to Climate Change

Using Monitoring & Assessment to Improve Core Elements

In 2013, the Association of State Wetland Managers and others engaged in protecting, conserving and restoring wetlands became concerned that wetland maps might be considered expendable.

Currently the National Wetland Inventory Program is funded at around $5 million per year. This includes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services contribution to completing and updating NWI maps (about 1% of the country per year), the national Status and Trends reporting on wetland acreage losses, and mapping for implementing the Coastal Barrier Resources Act. The President’s 2014 budget supports continuing and even increasing the funding to around $.5 million.

However, prior to the issuance of the President’s budget, there were efforts to nearly zero out the program within the administration. Our take away message is that the wetland community, as well as many others who depend on wetland maps, have not done a good enough job documenting and communicating that wetland maps merit more, not less funding, and that it requires the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services’ participation to ensure that maps are completed, meet the federal wetland mapping standard and get added to the National Wetland Inventory.

In 2013, the Association of State Wetlands Managers embarked on an effort to collect information on the diverse uses of NWI by each state in the country in order to: collect stories which highlight various projects which use or have used the NWI mapping service; discern who is using the data and what it is used to do; and to estimate the cost and time savings benefits of using the NWI as well as the potential consequences of not having NWI maps with up-to-date data available. Those summaries as well as other information about the status and trends in each state are available on ASWM’s website here.

To read our Wetland News article on this issue titled, National Wetland Inventory at Risk, please go here.
Identifying Best Practices for Developing Wetland Restoration and Protection Programs: Leveraging Adaptation to Climate Change

Wetland managers face a new set of challenges when addressing the impacts from global climate change. Wetlands are at risk of rapidly declining in quantity and quality due to impacts associated with climate change. However, wetlands also provide an effective strategy for mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Until recently, efforts to address climate change have only revolved around how to mitigate climate change by reducing greenhouse gases through investments in renewable energy, cleaner fuels and more efficient technologies. Most scientists, however, predict that even if we significantly reduce our carbon footprint immediately, the impacts of our past actions will continue to increase the occurrence and severity of extreme climatic events such as droughts, hurricanes and floods. Wetlands, however, not only absorb carbon, but they also act as sponges to absorb excess floodwater and filter out pollutants in stormwater. Strategic wetland restoration efforts will therefore play an increasingly important role in our efforts to not only mitigate but to also adapt to the impacts of climate change.

News articles from 2013, such as *Architects of the Swamp*, published in Scientific American, sounded the alarm about the success, or lack thereof, of wetland restoration. ASWM responded by completing two publications in 2013. The first publication titled, *Permits for Voluntary Wetland Restoration: A Handbook*, was completed in November of 2013. However, during discussions among the stakeholder workgroup, it became apparent that some positions or concerns advanced by participants could not be readily resolved through the publication of a handbook. So a white paper titled, *Voluntary Restoration of Wetlands: Complex Issues in the Regulation of Restoration Projects* was developed in order to document those unresolved concerns – including suggested program modifications that would require regulatory and or statutory changes beyond the purview of most wetland program managers.
Early in 2013, the US EPA funded an ASWM project entitled *Building Capacity for States to Use Monitoring and Assessment to Improve Implementation of other Core Elements*. In recent decades, our knowledge of effective methods for evaluation of wetland condition has increased considerably, to the extent that EPA carried out the first National Wetland Condition Assessment in 2011. Many states and tribes have or are currently building their own wetland monitoring programs, while others rely primarily on federal and academic data for scientific support. Regardless of the scope of current monitoring projects, many state level managers remain unsure of how best to collect and make use of data regarding wetland extent, condition, and beneficial functions to effectively support regulatory, restoration, water quality, and wetland stewardship programs.

The goal of ASWM’s project is to gather information regarding current monitoring practices from active state and tribal programs, as well as non-state scientists (those who work with federal agencies and academic institutions). ASWM will then compile a “best practices” handbook for use by states and tribes, and will also disseminate information through webinars and other written materials. In addition, ASWM will help to prepare sample outreach materials for use by states in explaining the results of the National Wetland Condition Assessment when those results are released in 2014-2015. Because wetland condition trends are of particular concern in the evaluation of climate change impacts, the integration of climate change concerns will also be addressed during this project.

Some project highlights from 2013 included:

- An introduction to the project and presentations on existing state and federal monitoring and assessment programs at the March 19-21 ASWM annual meeting in Shepherdstown, WV.
- Participation in regional workshops to expand our understanding of monitoring programs, needs, and gaps. These included a regional state and tribal wetland meeting organized by EPA Region 5 on October 29 – November 1 at the Kellogg Biological Station in Michigan; a statewide meeting of The Michigan Wetlands Association on November 7; and the New England Biological Assessment of Wetlands Workgroup on December 11, 2013.
- Participation on the Advisory Committee on Water Information – Water Resources Adaptation to Climate Change Workgroup. This group typically meets monthly via webinar, and is planning a face to face meeting in the Washington D.C. area late in 2013 or early in 2014.
- Participation in the National Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Workgroup organized by EPA to assimilate information regarding ongoing state, tribal, and other wetland monitoring and assessment programs and needs.
New Features

During 2013 ASWM added to its website at aswm.org new webpages on stream mitigation, and wetland mapping. It reorganized and expanded many other areas of the website including sections on climate change, news stories, wetland program plans, restoration and In lieu fee programs. Working with federal, state, tribal and nongovernmental partners, ASWM has fostered collaborative relationships to further its mission to promote the inclusion of sound science into public policy. The organization’s major accomplishments in 2013 are described below. Ongoing information on ASWM’s activities can be found on its website, which is updated weekly at http://aswm.org.

**Webinar Series:** A series of webinars are underway for the Wetland Mapping Consortium (WMC) and Natural Floodplain Function Alliance (NFFA) as well as a number of webinars for special projects. These are recorded and available to listen to on ASWM’s web page.

**Members’ Wetland Webinar Series – A Valuable Series of Training & Presentations:** ASWM launched a new wetland webinar series late last year. Members may participate and have access to recordings of past webinars, such as the recently held webinars on Wetland Inspection and Maintenance. Listen and engage with wetland science, policy and legal experts, and learn from the experience of other wetland professionals throughout the nation. Monthly webinars will cover science, legal and policy issues.

**Wetlands One-Stop Mapping:** This new section of our website provides comprehensive information and links to geospatial data on wetlands, soils and related information. Included is a 2013 summary of the status of state wetland mapping efforts and examples of the long list of ways wetland maps are used to support decision making for agriculture, transportation planning wildlife conservation, wetland restoration, permitting and more.

**Facebook and Linkedin:** ASWM posts interesting stories and hosts discussion on its Facebook and Linkedin pages. Please join us!

**Online Tools, Forums & Bulletin Boards:** ASWM uses a variety of tools from online bulletin boards to social media to generate good discussions on new science, proposed legislation and program development, legal decisions and hot topics, such as wetland mapping and floodplains. ASWM launched an online forum to be used by its work groups and webinar participants.

**The Compleat Wetlander:** ASWM’s top-ranking blog included unique weekly content. There were over 40 original blog posts in 2013. Along with The Compleat Wetlander and News from Southern Maine by Jeanne Christie, ASWM added three new bloggers in 2013: Salameander by Peg Bostwick, For Peat's Sake by Marla Stelk and The Wetland Wanderer by Brenda Zollitsch. The Compleat Wetlander blog offered analysis about wetland science and policy topics.

There was also a Guest Blog by Terri Turner: One of the Nation’s “Ecological Gems” – the Georgia Coastline.
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. Cooperative, synergistic, interdisciplinary research funding proposals and projects may be initiated that overcome limitations at a single institution or agency. ASWM hosted monthly webinars on a variety of wetland mapping and analysis techniques and strategies during 2013 which were recorded and are posted on the ASWM website.

Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance

Natural Floodplain Function Alliance (NFFA). The Association of State Wetland Managers is a founding member of the Natural Floodplain Function Alliance (NFFA). The Alliance is an affiliation of federal agencies, professional and nonprofit organizations, and individuals who are dedicated to the protection and preservation of the natural functions of floodplains, which includes coastal areas. It was established to “promote, protect, and enhance the protection, restoration, and management of natural floodplain resources.”

ASWM maintains an NFFA webpage on its website devoted to NFFA activities, including forthcoming and past webinars and conference calls. ASWM records webinars hosted by NFFA and they are available to the general public. Participation in the alliance is open to organizations that support natural floodplain functions.
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 36 states. In addition, ASWM has members in 47 states and 8 tribes.

State Associations & Organizations

Environmental Council to the States
Association of State Floodplain Managers
Association of Clean Water Administrators (ACWA)
National Association of State Foresters
Coastal States Organization
Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies
Groundwater Protection Council

Water Resources Science, Law, Academic & Environmental Organizations

River Network
Michigan Wetlands Association
American Rivers
McKnight Foundation
National Caucus of Environmental Legislators
Society of Wetland Scientists
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
National Wildlife Federation
Environmental Law Institute
Orchard Foundation
The Wetland Conservancy
St. Mary’s University of Minnesota
Ducks Unlimited
Virginia Tech
Oregon State University
University of North Carolina
   Environmental Finance Center
Society of Wetland Scientists Professional Certification Program
Muskie School of Public Service
   (University of Southern Maine)
Ramsar U.S.
Switzer Foundation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

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New Publications in 2013

**NWI At Risk.** The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) program, established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in 1974, is one of the oldest and most frequently used government mapping resources. It was established with the mission to create a nationwide inventory of U.S. wetlands to provide biologists and other stakeholders with data and visual displays of the physical distribution of wetlands in an effort to assist in wetland protection and conservation. Its future is uncertain.

**Wetland Program Plans Handbook:** This handbook provides states and tribes with guidance and resource materials to support the development of wetland program plans. It is the culmination of a two-year project carried out by the Association of State Wetland Managers through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency with additional support from the McKnight Foundation and The Orchard Foundation. Wetland Program Plans can establish priorities, set short and long term program development goals and provide states and tribes with a blueprint for future action. A wetland plan must be tailored to the unique opportunities and challenges that occur in a given state or on tribal lands. Therefore this document does not provide a recipe for developing a wetland program plan. Rather, it provides information about the different components that can be part of a plan and explores how a state or tribe might develop a plan.
Workshops/Conferences

State/Federal Coordination Workshop

The Association of State Wetland Managers held a three-day workshop March 19-21 at the National Conservation Training Center near Shepherdstown, WV. The topic of the annual State/Tribal/Federal Coordination Workshop was: “Conserving Wetlands and Waterways for Future Generations.” There were 108 attendees onsite and 68 remote participants.

During this three day workshop there was discussion on wetlands and ecosystem services, wetland restoration opportunities, and establishing wetland restoration priorities through GIS landscape analysis. The workshop also provided an opportunity to explore the use of monitoring and assessment information in the implementation of state and tribal wetland programs. In particular the third day of the workshop included panels on: “Using Monitoring and Assessment Data to Implement Wetland Programs”, “Using Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Data to Inform Decision Making”, “The National Wetland Condition Assessment: Status and Next Steps”, and “Using Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Data to Educate the Public about the Quality of State Wetland Resources.”

Following the workshop, the agenda and PowerPoints from the workshop were made available to participants here.

River Rally

Sunday, May 19, 2013, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 Understanding and Leveraging State Wetland Programs - At the annual River Rally conference held in 2013 in St. Louis, MO ASWM held a 3-hour training session with co-presenter Matt Meersman, Friends of the St. Joe River Association about state wetlands programs. The training session addressed wetland regulations, wetland water quality standards, monitoring and assessment and wetland restoration with special emphasis on targeted wetland restoration.

Using Ecosystem Services to Support Floodplain Decision-making

Thursday, June 13, 2013, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. as part of the Association of State Floodplain Managers Annual Conference. The potential for evaluation of ecosystem services, including valuation of wetland ecosystem services, was explored in a 1-day workshop. Lessons learned from Hurricanes Irene and Sandy were explored including opportunities for ecosystem services valuation to support protection, conservation and restoration of floodplains and coastlines in the context of natural hazard reduction.
Webinars

The Association of State Wetland Managers hosted a number of webinars in 2013 as part of ongoing projects to improve state wetland programs and to further the efforts of two collaborations: the Natural Floodplain Function 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 all webinars and they are available to view on the ASWM website. The 2013 webinar series are listed below.

Members’ Wetland Webinar Series

This monthly series continued through 2013. The webinar topics are provided below.

• Inspection and Maintenance of Wetlands – Tom Biebighauser, Wetland Restoration and Training
• Going, Going, Gone Millions of Acres of Wetlands and Fragile Land Go Under the Plow – Craig Cox, Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources and Soren Rundquist, Landscape and Remote Sensing Analyst Environmental Working Group
• Developing a Wetland Management Plan for the White Oak Bayou Watershed – Scott Owen, Terra Aquatica Environmental, LLC
• Permitting Wetland Restoration Projects – Peg Bostwick, Association of State Wetland Managers
• Designing Wetlands for Rare Amphibians – Tom Biebighauser, U.S. Forest Service
• Emerging Legal issues with Wetlands and Climate Change – Pat Parenteau, Esq., Vermont Law School and Jon Kusler, Esq. Association of State Wetland Managers
• Wetlands, Carbon and Climate Change, – Dr. William J. Mitsch, Director, Everglades Wetland Research Park
• Identifying Drained Wetlands – Tom Biebighauser, U.S. Forest Service

• Wetland Mitigation and the U.S. Supreme Court: Koontz v. St. Johns River Water Management District - Royal Gardner, Stetson University College of Law and Jan Goldman-Carter, National Wildlife Federation

Wetland Program Plans

ASWM completed this project in 2013 and hosted a series of webinars. The webinar topics are provided below.

• Regulation: Oregon’s State Regulatory Program for Wetlands and Waterways Conservation, - Bill Ryan, Assistant Director, Wetlands and Waterway Conservation Division, Oregon Department of State Lands
• State Wetland Restoration Programs - Jeanne Christie, Association of State Wetland Managers
• Targeting Wetland Restoration Outreach - Matt Meersman, Friends of the St. Joe River Association
• ASWM Annual State/Federal Coordination Workshop – A number of presentations at this workshop addressed integration of the core elements and focused on how to use monitoring and assessment data to support decision making in other core elements.
• Your Wetland Program Plan as a Sustainable Finance Tool - Glenn Barnes, Environmental Finance Center, University of North Carolina

Stream Identification/Delineation/Mitigation

As part of this project, ASWM hosted a series of webinars in 2013. The webinar topics are provided below.

• Science Policy and Outcomes in Developing Stream Compensatory Mitigation Criteria – Morgan Robertson University of Wisconsin, Rebecca Lave, Indiana University and Martin Doyle, Duke University
How to Use RIBBITS to Understand and Compare Stream Mitigation Banking and in Lieu Fee Practices Around the Country – Steve Martin, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The Ordinary High Water Mark: Concepts, Research, and Applications – Matthew Mersel, U.S. Army Corps Engineer Research and Development Center

Site Selection and Design for Stream Mitigation – Will Harman, Stream Mechanics

Out of Kind Stream Mitigation – Brian Topping, Wetland Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Streamflow Duration Assessment Method for the Pacific Northwest - Tracie Nadeau, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

A Review of Ordinary High Water Mark Research in the Western U.S. and Future Studies - Matt Mersel, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Wetland Mapping Consortium Series**

Webinar topics included:
- Creating a Value-Added Wetlands Layer: Enhancing the Utility of Wetland Mapping in Montana – Karen Newlon, Montana Natural Heritage Program
- NWI+ Data What It Is and How It’s Being Used - Ralph Tiner, Regional NWI Coordinator, Northeast Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Mapping “Natural” Floodplains - Kevin Coulton, cbec, eco engineering, inc.
- Soil Survey Information for Floodplain Mapping - Dave Hoovers and Sharon Waltman, Natural Resources Conservations Service
- National Wetlands Inventory - Jeanne Christie and Marla Stelk, ASWM
- Iowa Wetland Assessment and Restorable Wetland Inventory, - Chris Ensminger, Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- How has Wetland Training been Presented, What is Available, and How Might Innovative Technologies be used in the Future to Present Information to the Public and to Professionals – Dr. John M. Galbraith, Virginia Tech
- Documenting the Importance of the National Wetlands Inventory
- Newly Released Scalable Wetland Maps – Bill Wilen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Overview of Restore Act and Gulf Oil Spill Funding – Jim Pendergast, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Establishing Wetland Restoration Priorities through GIS Landscape Analysis: Case Studies and Discussion – Andy Robertson, St. Mary’s University of Minnesota, Ralph Tiner, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Shelly Barnes, New Mexico Environment Department
- Identifying Opportunities to Provide Education on Appropriate Use of GIS data – Discussion led by John Galbraith, Virginia Tech
- National SURRGO Wetland Soils Project – John Galbraith, Virginia Tech

**Natural Floodplain Function Alliance (NFFA)**

Webinar topics included:
- Informing Flood Mitigation with Ecosystem Service Valuation: An Introduction to the Ecosystem Valuation Toolkit – Zac Christin, Earth Economics
- Mapping Floodplains in Iowa Part II – Kris Johnson and Jan Slaats, The Nature Conservancy
- Iowa State Floodplain Mapping Program – Nathan Young, Iowa Flood Center.
2013 Active Projects

Projects Completed in 2013

Developing Comprehensive Approaches to Wetland Program Development with States and Tribes
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Improving Wetland Restoration Permitting Success
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Projects Ongoing

State Definitions and Requirements for Ephemeral, Intermittent and Perennial Streams
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Support Development of Sound Wetlands Policy through State Core Elements Outreach
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Identifying Best Management Practices for Restoration
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

To Support the Development of State and Federal Policies that Protect and Restore Wetlands and Floodplains along the Mississippi River
The McKnight Foundation

Use Monitoring & Assess to Improve Core Elements
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Looking Ahead to New Projects

High Quality Wetland Training for State and Tribal Wetland Staff
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Raising the Bar on Wetland Restoration Success Nationwide
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The McKnight Foundation

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

**FINANCIAL REPORT 2013**

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Board of Directors

Officers:

**David Davis, Chairman**
Dave is the Director of the Office of Wetlands & Water Protection at the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. In this position, he is responsible for Virginia’s independent nontidal wetland regulatory program and non-regulatory wetland programs. He is also a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists. In his spare time, Dave plays bass trombone. A native of Chincoteague Island, Virginia, Dave has resided in Richmond since 1990, is married, and has a precocious daughter who is in the “but why, Daddy” stage.

**Alan Quackenbush, Vice Chairman**
Alan runs the Wetland Program for the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. Originally from central New York, Alan had an early affinity for wetlands that were prevalent on the farm where he grew up. Alan served as a member-at-large on the board of the Association of State Wetland Managers; is a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists; is on EPA’s National Wetland Condition Assessment Workgroup and New England Wetland Workgroup for monitoring and assessment. He lives in the Green Mountains, just a few miles from work, with his wife Audrey and his dog, Sadie.

**Mark Biddle, Secretary/Treasurer**
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.

Members At Large:

**Deb Baker - Kansas Water Office**
Deb Baker is an Environmental Scientist with the Kansas Water Office, the water planning agency and the designated wetland planning agency for the state. In this position, Deb is responsible for securing and administering EPA Wetland Program Development grants, serving as a member of the 404 State and Federal Coordination Group, participating in development of wetland policy and implementing the Kansas Wetland Program Plan. In addition, she is involved in many watershed planning and assessment activities and has served as a planner for regional Basin Advisory Committees. She is currently coordinating the five year update of the Kansas Water Plan.

**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).
Doug Fry - Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Environmental Consultant

Doug Fry started with the Department of Environmental Protection (then Department of Natural Resources) in dredge and fill permitting in 1980. He holds a master’s degree in biological science from the University of Central Florida (formerly Florida Technological University). He has over 35 years of experience in the wetlands field and has been a Professional Wetland Scientist since 1996.

Doug Norris - Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Doug is the Wetlands Program Coordinator for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Ecological and Water Resources Division, a position he has held since 1992. Doug represents the DNR in developing state wetland policies and programs. He was involved in developing the original rules for Minnesota’s main wetland regulatory program and has collaborated on numerous subsequent legislative and rule revisions. Doug manages the DNR’s program for identifying and regulating impacts to calcareous fens, which receive special protection under state law. He provides guidance and technical assistance to DNR staff in reviewing wetland permits and in complying with wetland regulations for DNR projects. Doug also provides technical expertise in developing wetland assessment methods such as the Minnesota Routine Assessment Method and in developing methods for prioritizing wetland restorations for maximum benefit.

Bill Ryan - Oregon Department of State Lands

Bill Ryan is the Assistant Director at the Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) leading the Wetlands and Waterways Conservation Division and 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 working for various planning and engineering firms providing environmental planning and habitat restoration expertise for various planning and engineering firms.

Jeanne Christie, Executive Director

Jeanne has been with ASWM since 1999 and Executive Director since 2001. From 1995 to 1999 she was a Resource Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wetlands and Watersheds Division where she was national program leader for the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. She worked for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Wetlands Division (1988-1995) moving from the staff level to Section Chief and Acting Branch Chief. Jeanne is a 2007 winner of the National Wetlands Award for Education and Outreach. During her spare time she competes in ultra runs, teaches digital photography, and does volunteer work with the Maine Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club, and Riding to the Top Therapeutic Riding Center. She lives in an 1860 farmhouse in Windham, ME with her husband Larry and their ‘rescued’ animal companions Tux, Gabby and Massey.

Jon Kusler, Associate Director

Jon is a lawyer, writer, and educator with more than 35 years of experience with wetlands, floodplains and riparian areas. In addition to a law degree, he holds a M.S. in Water Resources Management and an interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Land and Water Management from the University of Wisconsin. He helped found the Association of State Wetland Managers in 1983 and served as its Executive Director from 1990 to 2001. He received EPA’s National Wetland Lifetime Achievement Award in 1990, the Gilbert White award in floodplain management in 1979, and the Society of Wetland Scientist’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009. He has authored many books and reports concerning wetlands, such as Our National Wetland Heritage: A Protection Guide, Regulating Sensitive Lands, and Wetland Creation and Restoration. He lives in an old farmhouse in Berne, New York with his wife Pat, two children (when they are home), many cats, and two lizards.

ASWM Staff
**Peg Bostwick, Senior Staff Policy Analyst**
Peg was Chief of the Wetland Lakes and Streams Unit in the Water Resources Division for the State of Michigan – Department of Natural Resources and Environment. Peg joined the (then) DNR in 1979 after completing a B.S. in fisheries and wildlife and additional graduate work in limnology at Michigan State University. With over 30 years of experience, Peg is also a member of the Society of Wetland Scientists, the Michigan Chapter of the North American Lake Management Society, and the Jacob Sheep Breeders Association. Peg lives with her family on a 40 acre farm near St. Johns, Michigan, where they raise Jacob sheep – an old heritage wool breed.

**Leah Stetson, Writer-Editor**
Leah is the Association’s resident human ecologist. She edits *Wetland Breaking News*, writes articles for *Wetland News* and develops content for ASWM’s website. Leah served on a number of work groups in 2011 including Water Quality Standards for Wetlands and the State Assumption project. She manages the social media, blog and campaign development. A published poet and conservationist, Leah holds a master’s degree in human ecology from College of the Atlantic. Before joining ASWM, she wore several hats—including a Smokey the Bear “Stetson” at Acadia National Park. Leah has over 15 years of nonprofit experience, with the last twelve years devoted to protecting natural resources. She likes to swim and explore local wetland preserves with her rescue dog, Sophie-Bea.

**Brenda Zollitsch, Policy Analyst**
Brenda began working part-time with ASWM in June. Brenda has her PhD in Public Policy from the University of Southern Maine’s Muskie School of Public Service, focusing on environmental policy and collaborative environmental management. She has her M.A. from Boston University and her B.A. from the University of Maine. She comes to ASWM with more than 15 years of nonprofit leadership experience and a strong background in academic and action research, collaboration building, facilitation and organizational capacity building. Brenda works part-time as an independent consultant to environmental collaborations in New England and has been instrumental in developing regional approaches to stormwater management in the State of Maine. She is also a Switzer Environmental Fellow (’09). Brenda is excited to be learning about the intricacies of wetlands policy and practice and is both an avid canoeist and a Registered Maine Whitewater Rafting Guide.

**Marla J. Stelk, Policy Analyst**
Marla J. Stelk started with the Association of State Wetland Managers in June 2013. She received her undergraduate degree from Colorado College in 1992 with a self-designed degree in Environmental Issues. She received her master’s degree this spring in Community Planning & Development: Land Use and the Environment, from the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine. While in graduate school, Marla interned with the York Land Trust, the Presumpscot Regional Land Trust, and the Maine Association of Planners and was a Research Assistant at the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership. She moved to Maine from Martha’s Vineyard in 2006, and settled in Gorham with her partner and their dog Alice in 2008. She has owned and operated her own metal sculpture studio business since 1999 and exhibits at various art and fine craft shows in Maine. She enjoys hiking backcountry, kayaking and canoeing on the waters of Maine, gardening, cooking and music.
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 the Association of State Wetland Managers, she has gained a greater appreciation for the local and national efforts to preserve and rebuild the wetland ecosystems that are all around us.

Steve Palmer, Bookkeeper
Steve has a B.S. in Business Administration from the University of Maine. Steve “re-tooled” after years in sales and has become a specialist for bookkeeping and tax preparations. He has worked for ASWM for six years. A flexible schedule has allowed Steve to donate some of his time to charity nonprofits. Steve and his wife, Dottie, live on a five-acre woodlot near Sebago Lake. They enjoy living in Maine with their Springer Spaniel, Jennie.

Laura Burchill, Program Assistant
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; assists with the many tasks involved in preparing for conferences and workshops; handles publication orders; as well as general office duties. She has 25+ years experience in graphic design and also works part-time for Parent & Family, a local publication. When not working, she enjoys spending time with her husband David and grown children, Chris and Stef.

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 19+ 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.