



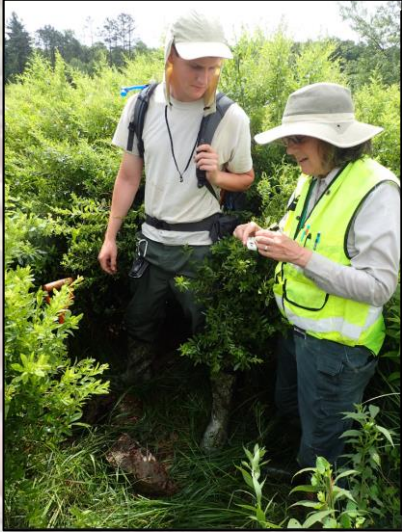
# State Update: WVDEP

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Presenters: Sara Miller and Kylie Joins



# WVDEP Wetlands Program





# Wetland Program Development Grants

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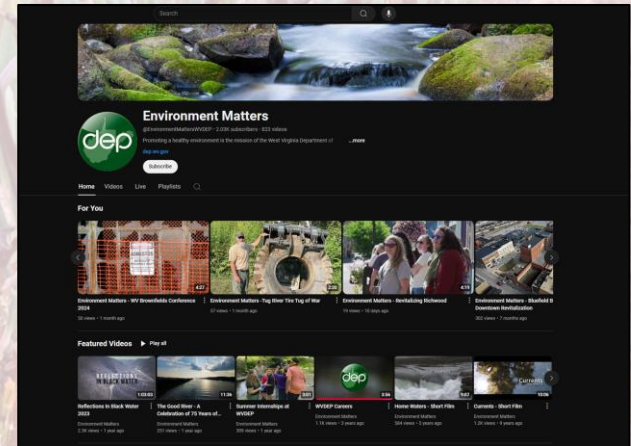
- Consolidating wetland program gains including new outreach initiatives and updated mapping in WV - completed
  - Please join us Thursday afternoon for more on this grant!
- Building increased capacity for wetland conservation in WV - beginning
  - Building capacity through planning, monitoring, support for new regulations, and training
  - Compile and disseminate new wetland maps and rankings
  - Engage teachers and citizen scientists in wetland conservation





# Building Increased Capacity: Updates

- **WVWRAM Training Videos - filming completed!**
  - Filming: Mike Huff, WVDEP Public Information Specialist
  - Content: Database usage and data entry, WVWRAM field demonstration
  - Dissemination: after winter editing completed, served on WVDEP Youtube Channel “Environment Matters” and linked on WVWRAM page





# Building Increased Capacity: Updates

- Increasing state interagency coordination

- Wetland Program Plan to be updated by March 2026
  - Future - WV Wetland Working Group



DEP/DNR trip to Short Mtn. WMA protecting rare wetland habitats



Jared Beard (NRCS) teaching about soils



- Field training and collaboration examples : WVWRAM training and working with DNR botanists in site assessment and vegetation monitoring
- Regulatory rollout of WVWRAM: now required April 15, 2025





# Building Increased Capacity: Updates

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- Updated NWI Wetlands Mapping: available now on the USFWS NWI Wetlands Mapper
- NWI Preliminary scoring: new NWI mapping has been scored with the GIS Tool, it is awaiting our final review, and then it will be served on WVDEP GIS Viewer



Previous NWI On WVDEP GIS Viewer



New NWI On NWI Wetlands Mapper



# Other updates: Permission Letters

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- Seeking permissions: contact options on private lands
  - MAWWG 2023: letters or postcards?
    - Thank you Kenneth Smith for inspiration!
  - Result: updates to our letter and photo description of assessment site
- Reformatted letter and added message
  - Results comparison
    - 2023: 28% of letters sent were returned (54 sent, 15 returned)
    - 2024: 55% of letters sent were returned (87 sent, 48 returned)
- 2025 Letters: additional verbiage on returning letter even if no wetland seems to be present
- Additional educational opportunity: adding brief summary of the findings at the site for landowners who request a report



# Other updates: Permission Letters



The image shows a letter from the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (dep) dated 5/23/2023. The letter is addressed to a redacted recipient. The subject is a request for permission to sample wetlands on a property with site ID WV20-10915. The letter explains the purpose of the wetland monitoring program and provides contact information for Sara Miller, WVDEP Watershed Assessment Branch. The letter is signed by Sara Miller and includes the department's logo and contact details.

  
west virginia department of environmental protection

Division of Water and Waste Management  
601 57th Street SE  
Charleston, WV 25304

Harold D. Ward, Cabinet Secretary  
dep.wv.gov

5/23/2023

██████████

Re: Request for permission to sample wetlands on your property  
Site ID WV20-10915, Coordinates 38.██████████ -79.██████████

Dear ██████████

West Virginia is carrying out a statewide wetland monitoring program to evaluate wetlands for clean water, flood protection, and wildlife habitat. We have identified wetlands on land that may be owned by you.

Wetlands are part of the foundation of our water supply and are vital to the health of our communities. Wetlands feed into rivers, lakes and streams, reduce flooding, recharge groundwater supplies, remove pollution and provide fish and wildlife habitat.

We would like to request permission to sample your wetlands. The sampling is a one-time event and takes 1-4 hours. It is carried out by a small team of 2 state wetland specialists and does not disturb the wetland or the land surrounding it. The wetland survey will not impact any of your rights as a landowner.

We would be very grateful if you could help support our survey by granting access to your land. Sampling results from our assessment can be made available to you upon request. If you would like more information about the state wetland program, please visit our web page at: <https://dep.wv.gov/WVE/watershed/wetland>.

If you have any questions, please contact me using either the email or phone number below. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
  
Sara Miller  
WVDEP Watershed Assessment Branch  
Phone: (304) 881-2804, Email: Sara.Miller@wv.gov

Promoting a healthy environment.

Previous Letter Format



The image shows a re-formatted version of the permission letter. It features a clean layout with the dep logo at the top center. The text is organized into clear sections, including the request for permission to sample wetlands on a property with site ID WV20-12345. The letter is signed by Sara Miller and includes the department's logo and contact details. The letter is dated 10/28/2024.

  
west virginia department of environmental protection

Division of Water and Waste Management  
601 57th Street SE  
Charleston, WV 25304

Harold D. Ward, Cabinet Secretary  
dep.wv.gov

10/28/2024

██████████

Re: Request for permission to sample wetlands on your property.  
Site ID WV20-12345, Coordinates ██████████

Dear ██████████

West Virginia is carrying out a statewide wetland monitoring program to evaluate wetlands for clean water, flood protection, and wildlife habitat. Wetlands are selected at random to survey. Wetlands on property that you may own have come up in the random draw.

We request permission to sample your wetlands. The wetland survey will not impact your rights as a landowner. In addition, a response declining permission for DEP to survey your wetland is perfectly acceptable and will not be penalized in any way.

**Response Form**

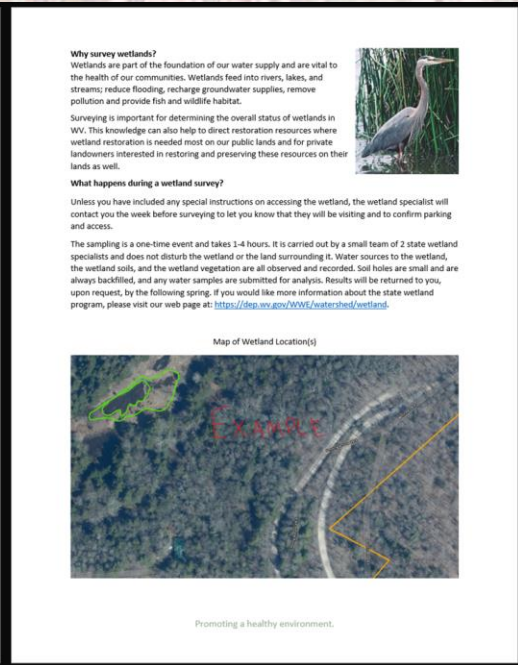
Please return the response form with your decision using the enclosed, stamped envelope. If we do not receive a response from you, the random survey protocol requires us to seek permission in person to ensure that we have done our best to survey the selected wetlands. This is important for collecting sound wetlands data.

We would be very grateful if you could help support our survey by granting access to your property. Sampling results from our survey can be made available to you upon request.

Sincerely,  
  
Sara Miller  
WVDEP Water Quality Standards and Assessment Section  
Phone: (304) 881-2804, Email: [Sara.Miller@wv.gov](mailto:Sara.Miller@wv.gov)

Promoting a healthy environment.

2024 Letter Re-Formatting



This page provides information about wetland surveys. It includes a photograph of a Great Egret in a wetland. The text explains why wetlands are important for water supply and wildlife habitat, and describes the survey process. It also includes a map of wetland locations and a link to the department's website for more information.

**Why survey wetlands?**  
Wetlands are part of the foundation of our water supply and are vital to the health of our communities. Wetlands feed into rivers, lakes, and streams; reduce flooding; recharge groundwater supplies, remove pollution and provide fish and wildlife habitat.

Surveying is important for determining the overall status of wetlands in WV. This knowledge can also help to direct restoration resources where wetland restoration is needed most on our public lands and for private landowners interested in restoring and preserving these resources on their lands as well.

**What happens during a wetland survey?**

Unless you have included any special instructions on accessing the wetland, the wetland specialist will contact you the week before surveying to let you know that they will be visiting and to confirm parking and access.

The sampling is a one-time event and takes 1-4 hours. It is carried out by a small team of 2 state wetland specialists and does not disturb the wetland or the land surrounding it. Water sources to the wetland, the wetland soils, and the wetland vegetation are all observed and recorded. Soil holes are small and are always backfilled, and any water samples are submitted for analysis. Results will be returned to you, upon request, by the following spring. If you would like more information about the state wetland program, please visit our web page at: <https://dep.wv.gov/WVE/watershed/wetland>.

**Map of Wetland Location(s)**



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2024-05-16 20:00:00 T 60°F  
HYPERFIRE 2 COVERT  
2023-10-02 19:00:00 I 55°F



2023-08-08 19:00:00 T 71°F  
HYPERFIRE 2 COVERT  
2024-01-08 16:00:00 T 42°F



HYPERFIRE 2 COVERT



HYPERFIRE 2 COVERT





**ANY QUESTIONS?**

