Availability of a CD-Based Tutorial on Wetland Identification

by James S. Wakeley

PURPOSE: This technical note announces the availability of an Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) CD titled "Identifying Wetlands: A Tutorial." This CD-based, self-learning tool (also available for download over the Internet) is aimed at new personnel in the Corps Regulatory program as well as experienced staff who need a handy reference to current guidance and information resources for wetland identification.

BACKGROUND: A previous technical note (ERDC TN-WRAP-02-01, May 2002), describes the need for and plan to develop a CD- or Web-based tutorial covering core topics in wetland delineation. The primary goal was to provide new hires in the Corps Regulatory program with basic information on wetland identification that they need to get up to speed on this essential skill. The tutorial is not intended to replace the week-long PROSPECT training course "Regulatory IV – Interagency Wetland Identification and Delineation." However, Regulatory IV is generally offered only once a year and space in the course may be limited. Therefore, some new staff must wait a year or more for this essential training. "Identifying Wetlands: A Tutorial" can help fill the knowledge gap. Furthermore, the tutorial is a valuable resource for experienced regulators by making available in one place the delineation manual, guidance memos, useful Web links, current definitions and indicators, and practical guidance for identifying wetlands.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TUTORIAL: The tutorial is organized into the following eight modules:

1 - Introduction and Basic Approach
2 - Preliminary Data Gathering
3 - Introduction to Hydrology and Soil Chemistry
4 - Introduction to Wetland Vegetation
5 - Introduction to Soil Properties and Descriptions
6 - Wetland Hydrology Indicators
7 - Hydrophytic Vegetation Indicators
8 - Hydric Soil Indicators

Information can be accessed in a variety of ways. People who are unfamiliar with wetland identification should navigate the entire tutorial in the order presented. Optional self tests are provided at the end of each module to gauge the student's progress. More experienced personnel can find the information they need quickly by using the expandable table of contents, the key-word index, or the word-search capability.

ERDC and Corps Headquarters are seeking comments on the tutorial and suggestions for future editions. If it proves useful, the tutorial could be expanded to include additional modules on routine

and comprehensive methods, atypical situations, problem area wetlands, and other topics in wetland delineation.

POINTS OF CONTACT: To download the tutorial from the Environmental Laboratory Web site, click on http://www.wes.army.mil/el/wrap/tools.html. This technical note should be cited as follows:

> Wakeley, J. S. (2003). "Availability of a CD-based tutorial on wetland identification," WRAP Technical Notes Collection (ERDC TN-WRAP-03-01), U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center, Vicksburg, MS.