



2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Association of State Wetland Managers, Inc.



Photo by Sharon Weaver, ASWM

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

- Edward Abbey



Photo by Marla Stelk, ASWM

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In 2019, ASWM projects were supported by the McKnight Foundation, the ASFPM Foundation, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Bureau of Land Management, 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 federal government shutdown and federal employee furlough that happened between December 22, 2018, until January 25, 2019, ASWM still had a very productive year.



Photo by Laura Burchill, ASWM

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 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. The project is designed to explore key assumption topics, including:

- Section 404 assumption basics and frameworks;
- Alternatives to assumption;
- Regulatory crosswalks;
- Assumable waters;
- Section 404 dredge or fill program and workload descriptions;
- Systems for assumption data management;
- Mitigation banking as a component of assumed programs;
- Potential funding strategies to support development and implementation of assumed 404 programs; and
- Elements of the case for assumption to state/tribal leadership, internal agency administration, partners, and the public.

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.



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 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. ASWM's project will address these challenges by:

- Exploring ways in which Wetland Program Plans and the Core Elements Framework can support urban wetland restoration, enhancement, and protection;
- Identifying opportunities for integrated mapping and functional assessment of wetland and floodplains to inform strategic, state and local decision-making and prioritization;
- Facilitating research and peer to peer exchange on innovative financing methods and improved cost-benefit techniques for nature-based projects;
- Cataloging findings and case studies in a white paper

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 Sharon Weaver, ASWM

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 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.

The project is focusing on key capacity building topics, including:

- Identification and analysis of regulatory gaps;
- Use of EPA Wetland Program Plans as strategic program development tools;
- Sustainable funding strategies;
- Methods to build compliance and enforcement capacity;
- Strategies for effective communication around regulatory capacity building efforts; and
- Documented tips on working with state legislatures to support regulatory programs.



Photo by William Dooley, ASWM

EPA Region 10 Tribal Wetland Program Webinars

The 2nd webinar for the Region 10 Tribal Wetland Program Webinars series was developed with the advisory workgroup – presenters were identified, a planning call and a tech check was held, and the webinar was hosted on June 25, 2019. The title of the webinar was “Balancing Tribal Economic Development, Sustainable Cultural Uses and Wetland/Aquatic Resource Protection and Restoration” and presenters included Tom Elliot, Biologist for the Yakama Nation Wildlife Program, Allison Warner, Wetland Ecologist/Wetland Program Coordinator for the Tulalip Tribes at Quil Ceda Village and Kara Kuhlman, Water Resources Manager for the Lummi Nation. A total of 665 people registered for the webinar and 382 attended. The webinar was recorded, post-processed and posted on ASWM’s website.



Photo by Andy Robertson, Saint Mary's University of MN

Healthy Wetlands, Healthy Watersheds: Leveraging State Wetland Restoration and Protection Programs to Improve Watershed Health

This two-year EPA Wetland Program Development Grant was awarded in January of 2017 and concluded in the spring of 2019. The primary goal of this project was to identify ways to integrate state and tribal wetland programs with other federal, state and local water, habitat and floodplain programs, in order to protect, restore and improve wetland acreage and quality while simultaneously improving overall watershed health.

The project was designed to increase state wetland program capacity to implement and support regional, state and local efforts to restore, enhance and create wetlands for the improvement of overall watershed health and increased resiliency to climate change. ASWM's project worked to address these challenges by:

- Establishing an interdisciplinary workgroup;
- Identifying past and current projects that are using traditional and hybrid wetland restoration techniques to improve watershed health;
- Identifying ecological, regulatory and programmatic barriers to using traditional and hybrid wetland restoration techniques for watershed health;
- Identifying states that have developed integrated programs to address broader watershed management goals and developing a worksheet to identify common attributes;
- Collaborating with states, tribes and non-profits involved in watershed issues to identify solutions and develop scientifically sound recommendations;
- Cataloging findings and case studies in a white paper; and

- Sharing ASWM's findings with states, tribes, and others through 7 live and recorded webinars, fact sheets, workshops, social media and our website.

A total of sixteen potential case studies that link wetland program management with other state agency programs were identified. Eight projects were selected for the final project to capture a range of types of integration from states that were able to document and share information about their efforts and success. ASWM identified a list of several successful watershed programs and initiatives that improved watershed health through traditional and hybrid wetland restoration and protection techniques. Nine watershed projects were selected, and data sheets were compiled, analyzed and later summarized into project summaries (one-page factsheets). Criteria for selection as well as draft templates for information gathering were reviewed and edited by workgroup members. ASWM also researched existing regulatory frameworks to identify barriers to restoring natural wetlands and floodplains and highlighted potential limitations due to conflicting program needs.

ASWM worked to identify best practices to encourage the use of wetland-based strategies for improving watershed health and project outcomes. Working with the project workgroup, ASWM conducted analysis to identify solutions and develop professional, scientifically sound and implementable recommendations on how to both overcome barriers and maximize benefits, based on findings from the case studies and input from the workgroup members. ASWM identified best practices and lessons learned, which are shared in the project white paper and final project presentation webinar recording.

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 is 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 includes other people who are working with or running compensatory mitigation programs such as state agency staff, etc.

To develop the compensatory mitigation training series content, ASWM worked with a national workgroup to develop webinar content, deliver, and record the following training webinars in 2019:

- 1) March 21, 2019: An Ecological Framework for Reviewing Compensatory Mitigation: Plan Review
- 2) April 18, 2019: An Ecological Framework for Reviewing Compensatory Mitigation: Coherent Plans – Goals, Objectives, Performance Standards, Outcomes and Monitoring
- 3) May 15, 2019: An Ecological Framework for Reviewing Compensatory Mitigation: From Conceptual to Final Design
- 4) June 27, 2019: An Ecological Framework for Reviewing Compensatory Mitigation: Anticipating the Unexpected
- 5) October 24, 2019: An Ecological Framework for Reviewing Compensatory Mitigation: Oversight and Compliance

This training series consists of individual modules. 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.



Photo by Sharon Weaver, ASWM

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

- Rachel Carson



Photo by Jim Pendergast, EPA Retired

NRCS Conservation Planners Training Webinars

In July of 2017, the USDA-NRCS signed an agreement with ASWM to develop and provide 9 webinars between 90-120 minutes in length each addressing learning objectives, discussion questions for each webinar and recommended plan for group viewing, and the development of supplemental onsite training curricula each addressing learning objectives for implementation by NRCS staff and partners in 3 umbrella topic areas. This project was completed in December of 2019.

Umbrella topic areas for onsite training curricula included:

- Selecting Wetland Restoration Sites and Designing Appropriate Projects
- Adapting to Extreme Weather Events
- Effective Communication

Webinars delivered in 2019 for the training series included:

- 1) February 15, 2019: Dealing with Reality: How to Work with Wetlands in Altered Landscapes
- 2) December 2019 (Non-Live Webinar): Identifying Resource Concerns and Determining Landowner Objectives
- 3) December 2019 (Non-Live Webinar): How to Talk about Wetlands with Landowners
- 4) August 5, 2019: What are the Choices and Benefits? Matching Objectives to Programs and Getting Additional Help
- 5) May 6, 2019: Dealing with Challenging Weather Patterns in Wetland Restoration Planning -

While each webinar was designed to be able to function as a stand-alone training resource, participants will get the most benefit from the webinars by watching them in sequential order, as each webinar builds off the prior webinars in terms of building a foundation of knowledge.



Photo by Marla Stelk, ASWM

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.

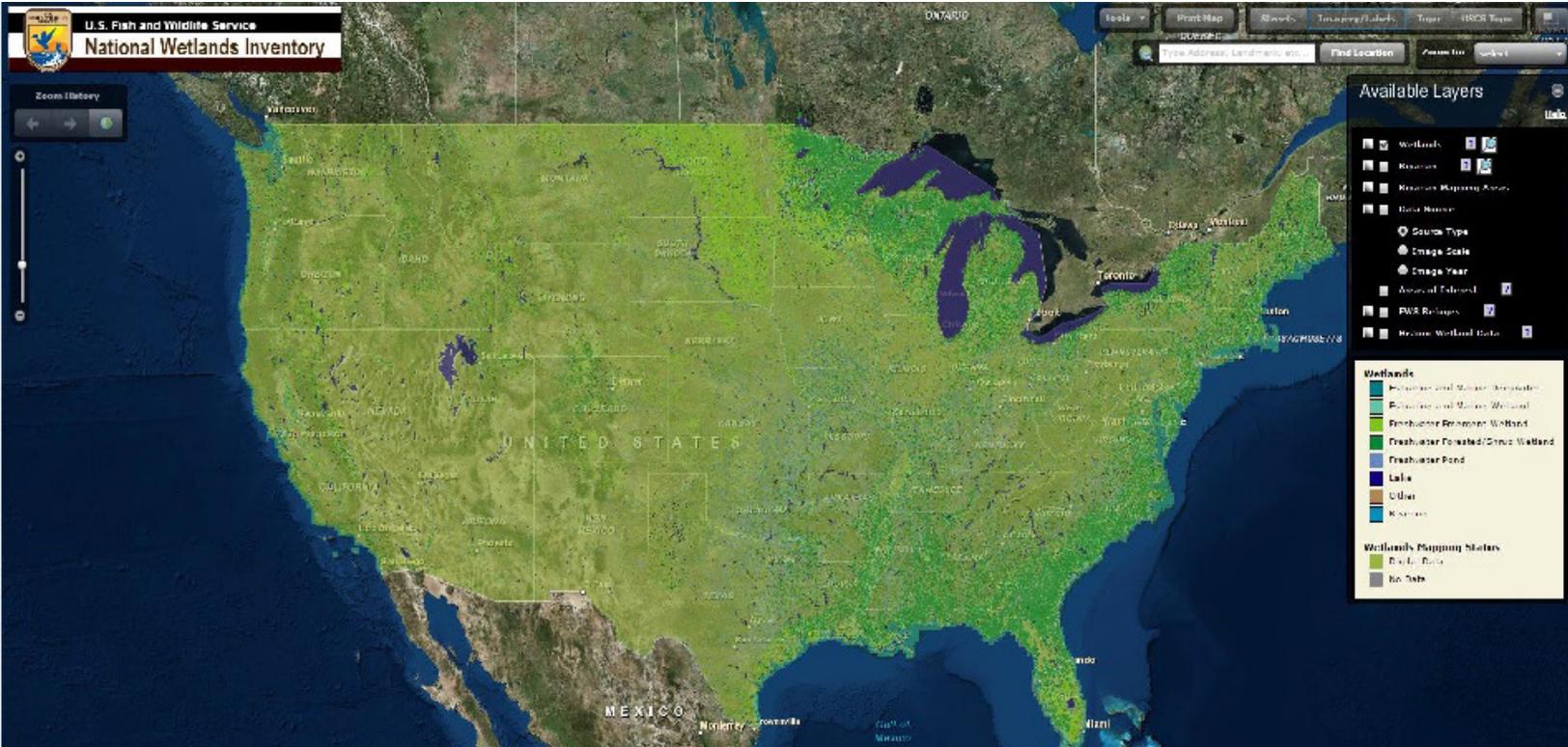


Photo Credit: USFWS

Advancing the National Wetlands Inventory Nationwide through Stakeholder Outreach and Education

ASWM worked with the Fish & Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) in 2019 on the development of 3 webinars designed to gather feedback for NWI from governmental and academic scientists and technicians to discover ways to automate the mapper using existing and newer technology. As part of this agreement, ASWM also planned, hosted, and facilitated 5 Wetland Mapping Consortium webinars and 1 American Wetlands Month webinar which were recorded, post-processed, and posted on ASWM's website.

- 1) May 29, 2019 (for American Wetlands Month): Can We Keep Up with Changing Estuaries? Moving from Science to Action in San Francisco Bay.
- 2) June 20, 2019: Mapping Thirty Years of Wetland Surface Water Dynamics Using Landsat Satellite Imagery: Implications for Climate Change and Species Management.
- 3) August 21, 2019: Mapping Wetland Inundation Dynamics and Wetland Change using Google Earth Engine.
- 4) September 4, 2019: Lessons Learned from the Minnesota NWI Update.
- 5) September 17, 2019: Indigenous Perspectives on Wetland Science and Management.
- 6) October 2, 2019: National Riparian Areas Base Map: Development & Applications.
- 7) October 23, 2019: National Land Cover Database 2016, General Overview and Applications to Wetland Assessment.
- 8) November 13, 2019: Wetland Inventory of Canada Using Optical and RADAR EO Data and Google Earth Cloud Computing.
- 9) December 3, 2019: NWI Data in Support of Conservation Efforts and Habitat Modeling.

In a previous agreement with NWI, ASWM performed outreach to 25 states and compiled the feedback received into a final report, including information on each state's mapping workload, current statewide wetland status and any noticeable or tracked changes in status or acreage, and identification of any potential drivers of change. In 2019, ASWM performed outreach to the remaining 25 states and organized the information into a new final report to be published in 2020. Support from NWI also helped maintain the Wetlands One-Stop Mapper on ASWM's website.

SPECIAL PROJECT



A Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance and Wetland Mapping Consortium Workshop: Data Needs, Gaps and Interoperability for Integrated Mapping and Functional Assessment of Riverine and Coastal Floodplains and Wetlands

In 2017, ASWM began facilitating a discussion between the Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance (NFFA) and the Wetland Mapping Consortium (WMC) about the possibility of creating a multi-year initiative to improve floodplain mapping by integrating geospatial data being developed and used by the wetland mapping community to identify wetland and floodplain functions. The two groups identified individuals from each organization to participate in a Planning Committee. The Planning Committee began holding monthly conference calls and decided to hold three annual workshops with a final long-term goal of developing a baseline national classification standard for functional assessment of wetland and floodplain functions that could be built on based on regional environmental variations as well as different project goals and state policies to better inform land-use decisions and reduce risk in local communities.

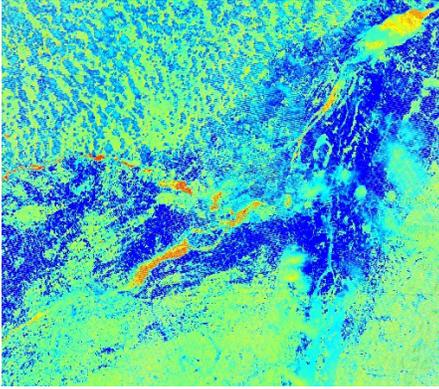
On Tuesday, April 10, 2018, the NFFA and the WMC hosted the first of the three planned workshops at the Tommy Douglas Conference Center in Silver Spring, Maryland entitled, “Exploring Opportunities for Integrated Mapping and Functional Assessment of Riverine and Coastal Floodplains and Wetlands.” After the success of the first workshop, the Planning Committee continued to meet regularly and planned a second workshop scheduled for September 30, 2019: “Data Needs, Gaps and Interoperability for Integrated Mapping and Functional Assessment of Riverine and Coastal Floodplains and Wetland”. The

goal of the 2nd workshop was to identify, 1) a core list of functions (wetland, riparian, coastal) that are useful for floodplain management and land-use decisions, 2) identify current techniques, tools and approaches that are available, and 3) where the gaps are for data, funding, and tool accessibility. The 2019 workshop was held at The Nature Conservancy headquarters in Arlington, VA. Thirty-four people participated in the workshop, including 11 federal agency staff, 3 university staff, 4 state agency staff, 15 non-profit staff and/or representatives and 1 private consultant.

The workshop focused on four different case studies at different scales to derive lessons learned and inform future efforts. Afterward, 4 individual presentations were given, and group discussions unpacked some of the information shared and provided the participants a chance to identify gaps, needs and next steps. Three discussion topics were included: 1) identifying datasets, databases, models, and approaches that are applicable to each level of the pyramid and levels of agency/organizational involvement; 2) identifying priority functions for assessment and methods for quantifying/scoring function provision; 3) identifying key agencies/organizations and others for implementation and useful resources, publications, and projects.

This project was supported by a mix of funding from the ASFP Foundation, the McKnight Foundation, and the U.S Environmental Protection Agency.

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
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 Laura Burchill, ASWM

STUDIES/REPORTS/TOOLS PUBLISHED



Healthy Wetlands, Healthy Watersheds

Leveraging state wetland restoration and protection programs to improve watershed health.



Healthy Wetlands, Healthy Watersheds: Leveraging State Wetland Restoration and Protection Programs to Improve Watershed Health

Nature-based approaches for water quality, hazard mitigation, climate change, biodiversity, economic growth, agricultural productivity and other issues have received a significant amount of interest and support in recent years. However, few studies have been performed to analyze how these approaches have been implemented, what the barriers to success may have been, and what kinds of lessons learned can be shared for others interested in pursuing a nature-based approach. This white paper captures and provides in-depth analyses of eight state program integration case studies as well as nine on-the-ground watershed projects to identify what worked, what didn't work, what some of the barriers to success were, how those barriers were circumvented and lessons learned that can be shared. Additionally, the white paper addresses the challenge of measuring the value of integration and information for users about common ways to build integration capacity. ASWM hopes this study will result in an increase in state and tribal wetland program capacity to implement and support regional, state and local efforts to restore, enhance and create wetlands for the improvement of overall watershed health and increased resiliency.

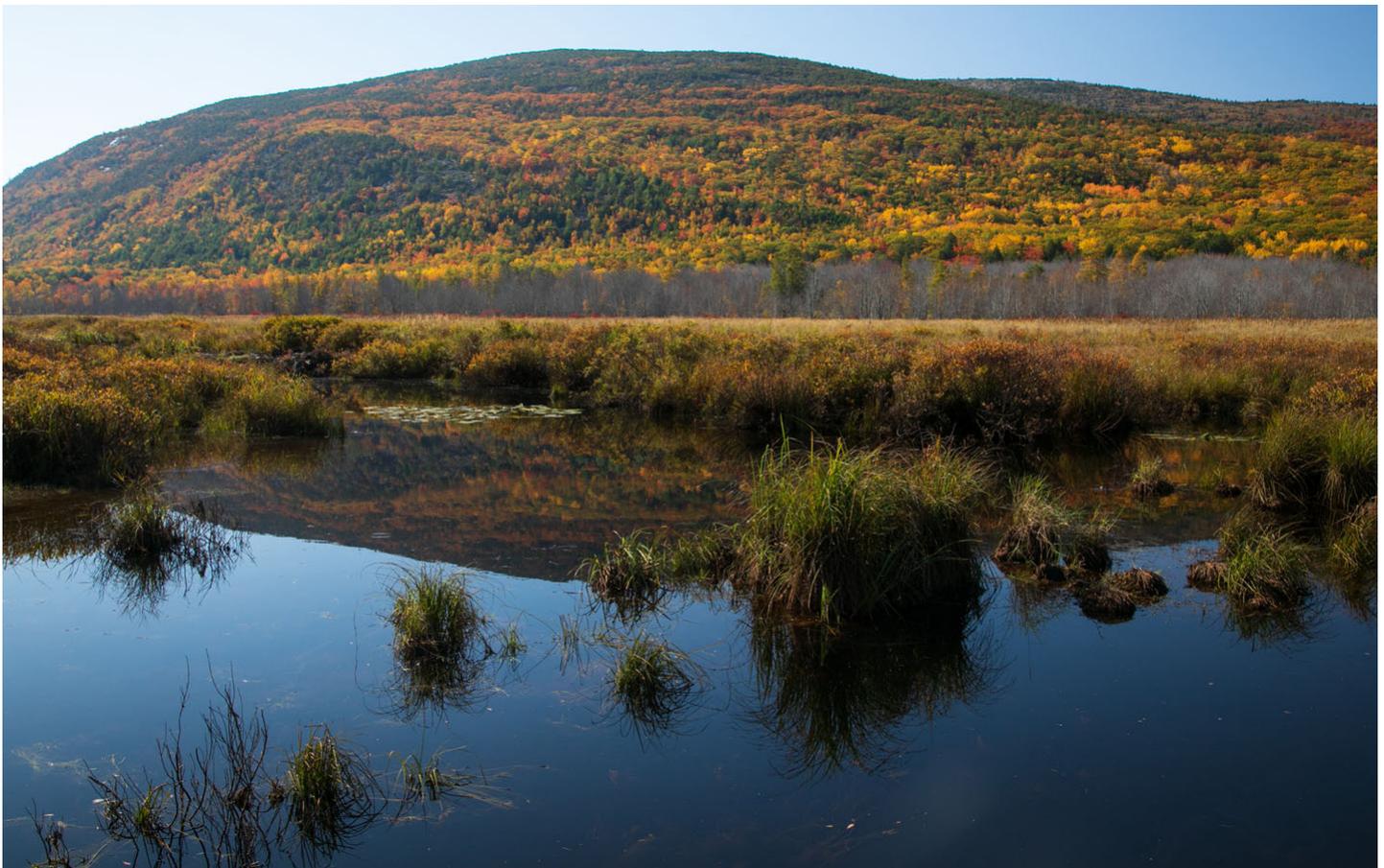
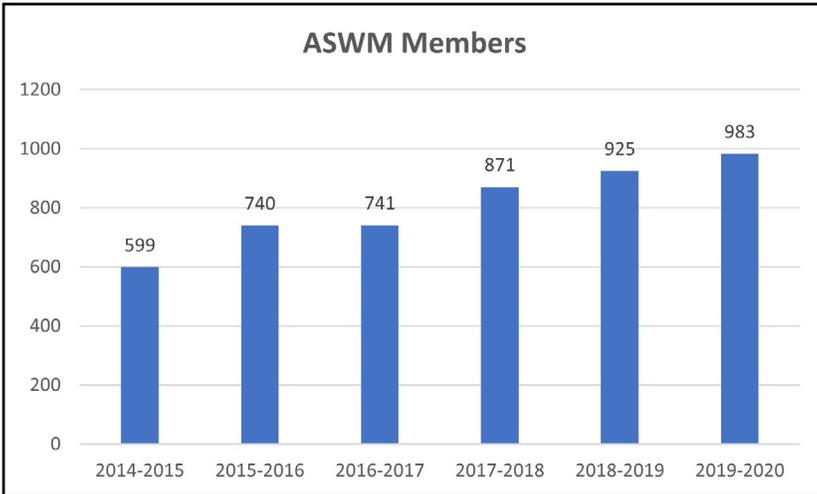


Photo by John McShane

ENGAGEMENT



ASWM Membership Development in 2019:

- In 2019 ASWM welcomed 275 new members
- Current number of members (December 2019): 983 members

ASWM Periodic Publications Ongoing in 2019:

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



Social Media Outreach:

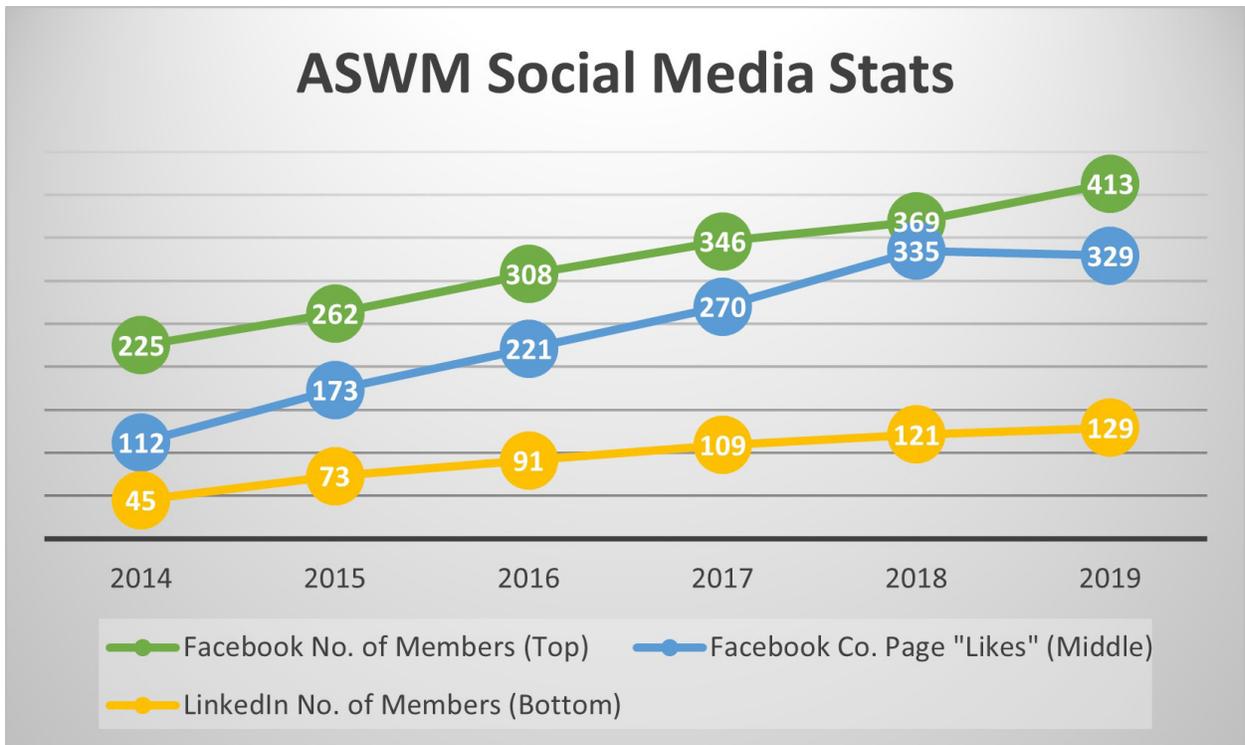




Photo by Marla J. Stelk, ASWM

ASWM Speaking Engagements/ Presentations in 2019

- National Mitigation and Ecosystem Banking Conference: Minneapolis, MN
- Environmental Markets and Finance Summit: Washington, DC
- Association of State Floodplain Managers Annual Conference: Cleveland, OH
- ALI CLE Environmental Litigation 2019 - Segment C - webcast
- Society of Wetland Scientists Annual Meeting: Baltimore, MD
- River Rally: Cleveland, OH
- NEBAWWG/MAWWG Meeting: Cooperstown, NY
- MWA Meeting: Grand Rapids, MI
- Association of Clean Water Agencies: Arlington, VA



Photo by Laura Burchill, ASWM

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 2019 include:

- February 5, 2019 – ASWM Submits Comments on NRCS Wetland Conservation Compliance Interim Rule
- February 14, 2019 – ASWM Joins WOTUS Comment Period Extension Request with ACWA and ECOS
- April 15, 2019 – ASWM Submits Comment Letter on Revised Definition of Waters of the U.S.
- August 9, 2019 – ASWM Submits Comments on the Proposed Mitigation Rulemaking
- August 13, 2019 – ASWM & ASFPM Submit Pre-Proposal Comments on Proposed Changes to CWA § 404(c)
- September 12, 2019 – ASWM & ASFPM Request Comment Period Extension for 401 Proposed Rule
- October 21, 2019 – ASWM Submits Comments on Clean Water Act Section 401 Proposed Rule
- November 27, 2019 – ASWM Submits Comments on S. 1087 Water Quality Certification Improvement Act of 2019
- December 5, 2019 – ASWM Joins Coalition Urging Secretary Bernhardt to Reverse CBRA Decision

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

WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES



ASWM State/Tribal/Federal Coordination Meeting

The Association of State Wetland Managers held a three-day meeting April 2-4, 2019 at the National Conference Center in Leesburg, VA. The topic of the Annual State/Tribal/Federal Coordination Meeting was “Translating Wetland Science into Fair and Reasonable Government Policies.” There were 119 attendees onsite and 34 remote participants each day.

During this three-day meeting there were presentations and discussion on: cooperative federalism and Waters of the U.S., the Clean Water Act and the Core Elements Framework, ecosystem services, mitigation banking, and 404(g) assumption. Following the meeting, the agenda and PowerPoints were made available to participants.



NFFA-WMC Workshop

On Monday, September 30, 2019, the [Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance](#) (NFFA) and [Wetland Mapping Consortium](#) (WMC) hosted a one-day workshop at The Nature Conservancy’s headquarters in Arlington, Virginia entitled, “Data Needs, Gaps and Interoperability for Integrated Mapping and Functional Assessment of Riverine and Coastal Floodplains and Wetlands.” This was the 2nd planned workshop in a broader multi-year collaborative initiative led by the Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) to integrate wetland and riparian geospatial mapping techniques and data into floodplain mapping programs to assess individual and combined functions of these natural systems for risk reduction and more strategic land use planning. There were 34 participants.



WEBINARS

The Association of State Wetland Managers hosted a number of webinars in 2019 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 2019 webinar series are listed below.

Members' Webinars

ASWM held eight Members' Webinars in 2019 with a total of 1,642 participants. Some of the topics covered were: Wetland Restoration, Natural Disaster Mitigation, Niagara River Corridor Ramsar Designation, USFWS IPaC Tool, and Healthy Wetlands, Healthy Watersheds Project.

Hot Topic Webinars

ASWM held five Hot Topic Webinars with a total of 1,613 participants. Webinar topics were:

- Waters of the U.S.: Interpreting Geographical, State Program and Legal Impacts of Past, Current and Future Definitions
- Can We Keep Up with Changing Estuaries? Moving from Science to Action in San Francisco Bay
- Indigenous Perspectives on Wetland Science and Management
- A Legal Analysis of the Clean Water Act § 401 Proposed Rule

Compensatory Mitigation Webinars

In 2019 ASWM held five Compensatory Mitigation Webinars. There were 1,637 participants.



ASWM-NRCS Wetland Restoration and Communication Webinars

In 2019 ASWM held the next three of nine ASWM-NRCS Wetland Restoration and Communication Webinars. There were 1,058 participants.

EPA Region 10 Tribal Wetland Program Webinars

One webinar was held for the EPA Region 10 Tribal Wetland Program Series in 2019 with 382 participating. The topic was "Balancing Tribal Economic Development, Sustainable Cultural Uses and Wetland/Aquatic Resource Protection and Restoration."

Natural Floodplain Functions Alliance (NFFA) Webinars

This year ASWM held three NFFA Webinars with a total of 562 participants. Some of the topics were: Green Infrastructure, Reducing Flood Risk and Restoring Ecosystems, and Engineering with Nature for Flood Risk Management.



FINANCIAL REPORT

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Cash	486,820
Accounts Receivable, Net	16,187
Prepaid Expenses	<u>2,073</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$505,080

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities	
Accrued Expenses	<u>9,748</u>
Total Liabilities	\$9,748

Net Assets	
Without Donor Restrictions	490,142
With Donor Restrictions	<u>5,190</u>
Total Net Assets	\$495,332
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$505,080

2019 AUDIT

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



REVENUES and OTHER SUPPORT

Grant Income	533,555
Contributions	1,361
Program Fees	66,259
Membership Dues	50,557
Sponsorships	10,000
Interest Income	5,448
In-kind	<u>10,886</u>
TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	\$678,066

EXPENSE

Compensation and Benefits	412,965
Program Expense	133,242
Occupancy	21,240
Travel Expense	18,363
Office Computers (IT)	21,020
Office Expenses	12,063
Bank Fees	3,753
Insurance	1,699
Professional Fees	24,237
Telephone	5,487
Miscellaneous	7,833
In-kind	<u>10,886</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$672,788

Increase in Net Assets	<u>5,278</u>
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	<u>490,054</u>
Net Assets at End of Year	\$495,332

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT



On September 10th and 11th, 2019, ASWM held its first Board of Directors Strategic Planning Retreat in Portland, Maine. ASWM staff worked with a small planning team from the Board and Leigh Tillman, a professional local neutral facilitator, to design, organize and host the retreat at the Marriott Residence Inn in downtown Portland.

This retreat was designed for ASWM to accomplish the following objectives:

- To learn more about state agency and other organizational experiences and the whys in being a part of ASWM;
- To look back where ASWM has come as an organization in serving states and other members as well as where we are now;
- To envision how ASWM can best serve members and develop our roadmap for how we will get there;
- To identify what other organizations we need to maintain and strengthen partnerships with, and organizations with whom we need to forge new partnerships; and
- To determine how we will work together as a board to enact our plans.



In breakout groups we identified ASWM's current strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats in serving members. We reported out our ideas to the whole group and utilized these ideas to inform our planning, building on our strengths and opportunities and responding to our challenges and threats. Then in pairs and small groups we discussed where we envision ASWM is headed over the next ten years. We brought our thoughts and ideas back to the whole group and together honed a shared vision for where ASWM is headed in this work that incorporates our many perspectives. We reviewed our mission statement and discussed how it aligns with our vision and informs the work of ASWM and its members. We assessed its pertinence and focus and determined as a group if and how we might want to revise it.



Then we developed a roadmap for the next five years in line with our vision to enact our mission and support our work in building state capacity. Having developed the ASWM plan for the coming five years, we decided how ASWM staff and the Board want to work together to enact our goals and integrate our planning into the day-to-day functions of our organization. We developed and populated new committees for the Board in line with our new goals. And at the end of day two, we held four focused group discussions: ASWM's current and future identity; working with and building relationships with Tribes; future topics for policy guidance and trainings; and possible new revenue streams for sustainable funding.



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.



Tom Harcarik, Vice Chairman

Tom is an environmental planner with Ohio EPA's Division of Environmental and Financial Assistance where he evaluates stream and wetland protection and restoration projects under the innovative Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program. Tom also assists communities by reviewing potential environmental impacts to streams and wetlands, threatened and endangered species, historic properties, and floodplains that may result from projects seeking financing through the Water Pollution Control Loan Fund and Water Supply Revolving Loan Account SRF programs.

Tom started his career at Ohio EPA as a summer intern in 1985 conducting surveys of fish and macroinvertebrate communities in rivers and streams throughout Ohio. Tom has since worked for Ohio EPA for over 29 years, including 18 years in the 401 Water Quality

Certification program and Wetland Ecology Group. Additionally, Tom represented Ohio EPA in civil enforcement matters and served as a liaison to the Attorney General's Office for Ohio EPA's solid waste and unregulated hazardous waste programs. Tom served in Ohio EPA's Wetland Ecology Unit, and was the lead author on a paper to quantify the benefits of restoring wetlands in urban watersheds to treat nutrients and reduce flooding. More recently, Tom co-authored a paper with colleagues at Ohio EPA developing a protocol to locate wetlands in agricultural landscapes to reduce nutrient loadings.

Tom received a B.S. in Conservation, with a focus on aquatic ecology, from Kent State University. Tom currently lives in Columbus, Ohio with his wife and two children. Tom enjoys backpacking, hiking, kayaking and just generally being outdoors with Marston, his five year old chocolate labrador retriever. Tom lives by the motto, "A bad day in the field always beats a good day in the office!"



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.

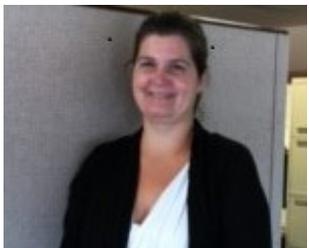
Lauren received her bachelor's in environmental studies from the Evergreen State College where she studied ecology, botany, organic agriculture and computer sciences. Lauren and her husband live in Yelm, Washington and they have two fledging adult children along with a dog and two indoor cats (who are 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:



Jill Aspinwall, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

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.



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).



Timothy Rach - Florida, Department of Environmental Protection

Timothy Rach is a Program Administrator in the Submerged Lands & Environmental Resources Coordination Program. He has been with DEP for over 22 years in various management and supervisory positions. Most of his time has been in the Environmental Resources Permitting program regulating development in wetlands and surface waters. Tim is responsible for overseeing the statewide implementation of the ERP rules and regulations within the Department, Water Management Districts and local delegated programs. He holds a BS degree in Marine Biology from Troy University and a MS degree in Ecology from Old Dominion University.

Prior to working for the state of Florida he interned with the dredge and fill section in the Norfolk District (VA) of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers while he was working on his Master's Degree. Tim lives in Tallahassee, Florida with his wife Denise and their three kids. Tim enjoys camping, hiking, volleyball and brewing beer.



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.



Photo by Dawn Smith, ASWM

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.

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.

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.

Starsha Schiller, Intern

Starsha is currently pursuing a master's degree in Policy, Planning and Management from the Muskie School of Public Service (the Muskie School), at the University of Southern Maine (USM). Prior to attending the Muskie School, Starsha worked in the nonprofit sector in both Maine and New York City focusing on fundraising, event planning, program development and community organizing. Her studies at USM have concentrated on policy analysis and program evaluation. Upon completing her degree in May 2019 she hopes to work as a consultant supporting organizations and communities develop, implement and evaluate their programs and policies. Starsha loves living in the beautiful state of Maine and enjoys exploring its splendor while hiking and kayaking. She is thrilled to be working with the team at ASWM and looks forward to supporting their important work this summer. Some of her projects include conducting a comparative analysis of regulatory best practices and assisting in ASWM's website review and update.



Photo by Laura Burchill, ASWM



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