

National Wetland Plant List: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Public Notices 2016 Revisions



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The United States Army Corps of Engineers ("Corps") published an April 18th notice in the Federal Register announcing the availability of the final 2016 National Wetland Plant List ("NWPL"). See 81 Fed. Reg. 22580.

The Corps developed the 2016 NWPL as part of an interagency effort with the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service ("FWS") and the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The NWPL is used to determine whether the hydrophytic vegetation parameter is met when conducting wetland delineations under the Clean Water Act and Wetland Conservation Provisions of the Food Security Act.

Wetlands are a subset of Clean Water Act waters of the United States. Three parameters are required to be addressed in Corps and other agencies delineation of wetlands:

- Wetland plants (hydrophytic vegetation)
- Wetland soil (hydric soil)
- Adequate water (wetland hydrology)

During a wetland delineation, a project area is surveyed to determine whether the three criteria are present.

The NWPL was first published by the FWS in 1988 and updated in 2012 to include 7,828 species. Additions, or deletions, to these lists are stated to represent new records, range extensions, nomenclatural and taxonomic changes, and newly proposed species. The latest review process is stated to have begun in 2015 and included a review by Regional Panels, the National Panel and the public whom provided input on changes to the wetland indicator status of 1,689 species.

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