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**Department of Development**  
**and Environmental Services**  
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## Wetland Delineation Report Criteria

For alternate formats, call 206-296-6600.

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### Introduction

The purpose of a wetland delineation report is to convey an objective, factual picture of the extent and location of wetlands at a given site. The report is based on the collection of field data and review of any pertinent background information. A report must contain field data sheets; an accurate map of the site, including wetland boundaries and the location of all the data collection points; and a narrative that explains the delineator's approach to collecting data as well as their conclusions.

### **Section I. Field Procedures and Standards**

Delineators shall use the *Washington State Wetlands Identification and Delineation Manual* (Washington State Department of Ecology, March 1997) as the technical basis for identifying and delineating wetlands.

Delineators shall evaluate and affirm in writing that the entire project site and surrounding vicinity within a minimum of 100 feet of the project boundaries was examined on the ground (except where access was denied) and whether wetlands and/or streams are present within these areas.

Delineators shall uniquely identify the boundaries of each wetland in the field by affixing colored, lettered and numbered flagging to fixed objects such as wood vegetation or survey stakes (e.g., Wetland A, Flags #A1-AX; Wetland B, Flags #B1-BY; Wetland C, Flags #C1-CZ, etc.) Flagging shall be placed at intervals no greater than 25 feet in wooded areas, up to 40 feet in open areas.

Delineators shall uniquely identify in the field each sample plot site for which data are recorded by affixing colored, lettered and numbered flagging to fixed objects such as woody vegetation or survey stakes. As a rule, large and/or complex sites with broad transition zones are likely to need many sample points to adequately reflect ground conditions, whereas smaller, less complex sites may only need a few sample points.

Soils must be examined to a depth below the A horizon, or to 18 inches, whichever is greater, per the *Washington State Wetlands Identification and Delineation Manual*. Soil characteristics (e.g., Munsell colors, mottling, oxidized rhizospheres, textures, moisture content, etc.) must be described throughout the entire soil profile examined.

To facilitate field verification by agency staff, wetland flagging shall be in place and be easily readable when agency staff members conduct field verification of the delineation.

Field observations of hydrologic connections among wetlands or between on-site or off-site streams and wetlands shall be noted on the data sheets, shown on the wetland delineation map, and fully discussed in the report.

Delineators shall take at least two color ground photographs of each wetland and stream for inclusion as an appendix to the wetland report.

## Section II. Wetland Maps

Wetland delineation maps shall show the following information:

1. Reference streets, North arrow and scale.
2. Wetland boundary flags, with flag numbers.
3. Sample points corresponding to field data sheets.
4. Contours at the smallest easily available interval. For large developments, plats and short plats, or where mitigation is proposed, flagged wetland boundaries and the numbered sample plots shall be mapped at the 2-foot contour interval following a civil survey conducted by a qualified professional surveyor. Smaller projects such as residential building permits may measure as accurately as possible from identifiable points.
5. Areas on and within 100 feet of a proposed wetland and/or stream mitigation site where grading will be conducted shall be shown at the 1-foot contour interval.
6. Stream channels shall be shown at whichever of the above contour intervals is appropriate, depending on whether a stream is on or within 100 feet of a proposed wetland and/or stream mitigation site. In addition, show cross-sectional profiles at 25-foot intervals for meandering streams and 50-foot intervals for channelized streams. Additional information about stream channel morphology may be required as part of a separate stream habitat special study.
7. Observed hydrologic connections among wetlands or between on-site or off-site streams and wetlands.
8. Photo points where photographs of site wetlands and/or streams were taken.

## Section III. Wetland Reports

Wetland reports submitted to the county for review shall contain at a minimum the following:

1. Field data sheets, documenting vegetation, soils and hydrology observations at indicated sample points.
2. Date and weather conditions when the delineation occurred.
3. Colors of flagging used to identify wetland boundaries, sample points, and all other civil survey features.
4. Vicinity map.
5. Site map, showing existing and planned lot lines, existing and proposed roads and trails, existing and planned streets, culverts, stormwater facilities, structures, streams, wetlands, steep slopes, 100-year floodplain boundaries, and significant trees.
6. Associated King County inventoried wetland maps if such associated wetlands are present. These should be included even if the area in question is outside of the identified King County wetland but the two are associated hydrologically or if activities in the area in question could impact the associated wetland.
7. Wetland delineation map, as described above.
8. Map of any wetland areas that may be impacted by the project.
9. Methodology section. Describe the delineator's approach to collecting data, and discuss any modification to the standard sampling methodology and rationale. Include a description of how plant dominance was established and why the methodology used was adequate to characterize the vegetation. In general, the more complex the plant community is the more likely that quantitative sampling will be necessary.
10. Results and Discussion section. This must include the rationale for the determination of the wetland boundary and how it was subsequently marked or flagged. This discussion must be supported by the data as documented on the field data sheets. Other information to support the conclusions of the delineator that may be included are a discussion of site topography, the location of plant communities, site land use history, King County Wetland Inventory information, soil survey mapping and soils descriptions, and unusual site characteristics.
11. Impact Assessment section. The wetland report should provide general information on the development proposal and whether and how wetland area and functions will be adversely affected by the proposed project. More detailed information will be required as part of a mitigation proposal if the county agrees that wetland impacts are unavoidable for an individual proposal.
12. Summary. This section should briefly summarize and conclude the results of the field investigation.
13. Literature cited.

## Reference

Washington State Dept of Ecology; *Washington State Wetlands Identification and Delineation Manual*. March 1997.

**Check out the DDES Web site at [www.kingcounty.gov/permits](http://www.kingcounty.gov/permits)**