

# **EPA Wetland Program Development Grants**

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## **Improving Compensatory Mitigation**

**Mitigation Stakeholders Forum**

**September 20-22, 2004**

**Tampa, Florida**



# Wetland Program Development Grants

- Grant Program Background
  - Authority
  - Eligibility
- Funding Priorities
- Compensatory Mitigation Examples
- Future Directions



# Grant Program Background

## ■ Purpose

- Provide direct support to S/T/LG to increase their participation in wetland protection

## ■ Establishment

- 1990

## ■ Appropriation

- Initial: \$1 million STAG
- Current: \$15 million STAG



# Funding Authority:



- Statutory authority
  - CWA § 104(b)(3)
- Authorized activities
  - Research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies
  - Related to causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution



# Who is Eligible?

## ■ Eligible applicants

- CWA 104(b)(3): S/T/LG, intertribal consortia, interstate agencies, NGOs
- National WPDG guidelines:
  - Regions: S/T/LG, intertribal consortia, interstate agencies
  - HQ: NGOs

## ■ Eligible activities

- 104(b)(3) authorized activities aimed at developing and refining wetland management programs



# Making Funding Decisions

- 25% Match
- Competitive program
- Funding Priorities
  - Improving compensatory mitigation
  - Developing monitoring and assessment programs
  - Protecting vulnerable wetlands



# Compensatory Mitigation

- Develop and verify assessment methods and/or tracking systems that document:
  - Technical adequacy of mitigation project plans
  - Ecological suitability of mitigation project sites
  - Mitigation project compliance
  - Cumulative impacts
- Prohibitions



# Examples:



## ■ Florida

- Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Mitigation Banking

## ■ North Carolina

- Expand and Update Computerized Tracking System for NC's Freshwater Wetland Permitting Program

## ■ Washington

- Revise Mitigation Guidelines and develop "Landscape-scale" Wetland Management Guidance





# Examples:

- San Francisco Estuary Institute, So CA Coastal Water Research Project, and Coastal Commission
  - Development of CA Rapid Assessment Method - CRAM
- CA State Water Resources Control Board
  - Assess mitigation effectiveness
    - Los Angeles Region – 10/04
    - San Diego Region – underway



# Examples:



- Iowa – DOT
  - Assessment of Compensatory Mitigation
- Venture County, CA
  - Impact assessment and Mitigation Guidelines
- NGOs
  - NatureServe – Mitigation Site Performance Standards pilot



# Future Directions

- 2005 National WPDG guidelines
  - Under review
  - Likely maintain three priorities
- Compensatory Mitigation Priority
  - Emphasis on developing, improving, and/or refining Performance Standards

