



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Omaha District

PUBLIC NOTICE

**Announcement of Change in Local Procedures in
Review of Individual Permit Applications,
Regarding the Use of the Functional Assessment
of Colorado Wetlands (FACWet) Method**

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ISSUED BY:

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District
Denver Regulatory Office
9307 South Wadsworth Blvd
Littleton, CO 80128-6901
Phone (303) 979-4120
FAX (303) 979-0602

SPECIAL PUBLIC NOTICE

**Announcement of Change in Local Procedures in
Review of Individual Permit Applications,
Regarding the Use of the Functional Assessment
of Colorado Wetlands (FACWet) Method**

The purpose of this notice is to advise the general public of the availability of the Functional Assessment of Colorado Wetlands (FACWet) Method, which will be required for use when evaluating and assessing certain wetlands in conjunction with application for certain Section 404 Permits from the Corps' Denver Regulatory Office (DRO).

FACWet is a stressor-based, rapid assessment method developed as a collaborative effort involving Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado State University, EcoMetrics, LLC, the DRO, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Permit review decisions for Department of the Army Section 404 permits that include assessment of potential wetland impacts and mitigation will incorporate the use of this functional assessment tool for pre- and post-project evaluation, and mitigation planning.

This announcement is for the implementation of FACWet in the DRO's Area of Responsibility (AOR) only. Required use of FACWet for certain wetland assessments will begin June 1, 2009. Initial implementation will be within the DRO AOR to evaluate its use and effectiveness, with potential statewide implementation occurring at a later date.

Use of FACWet will generally be required for all proposed projects where impacts to wetlands will be 0.5 acre or greater, unless unique conditions warrant use on a case-by-case basis. FACWet will be used by DRO as a tool to assist in determining wetland functions potentially impacted, assess the ability of mitigation plans to replace impacted functions and to assess the success of mitigation wetlands. Please note, in

addition to the use of FACWet to aide in permitting decisions, DRO will continue to require minimum acreage replacement of impacted wetlands at a 1:1 ratio. This approach will help insure there is no-net-loss of both wetland acreage and function.

FACWet should be used during the planning stage of projects that may impact wetlands or riparian habitats where proposed impacts would be 0.5 acre or greater. The FACWet report and user manual is available online and may be downloaded at <http://www.dot.state.co.us/Publications/PDFFiles/facwet.pdf>. It is recommended that persons involved in Section 404 permitting attend a training course. To date, three training sessions have been held, and three additional sessions will be available in 2009. Notice of available training sessions, the user guide and datasheets/automated spreadsheet can be found at <http://rydberg.biology.colostate.edu/FACWet/>.

The FACWet user guide can also be purchased at the following National Technical Information Service website:

<http://www.ntis.gov/search/product.aspx?ABBR=PB2009106646>

Questions concerning the technical application of FACWet should be directed to Dr. Brad Johnson:

Brad Johnson
Dept. of Biology
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1878
bjohnson@lamar.colostate.edu

Any questions concerning the implementation of FACWet within the regulatory framework should be directed to the Corps Denver Regulatory Office at 9307 South Wadsworth Blvd., Littleton, Colorado, 80127, or to phone number (303) 979-4120.