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Sent: Friday, September 01, 2017 11:11 AM
To: Swanson-Cullen, Carla (BWSR) <carla.swanson-cullen@state.mn.us>
Subject: Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) Program Update

This email was sent to SWCD Main Contacts, WCA LGU Contacts and WCA LGUs - State Agencies. Please pass on to others as warranted.

Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) Program Update

Date: 9/1/17

Re: Wetland Replacement Siting, Lateral Effect/Setback Tables, and MnRAM

Wetland Replacement Siting

The attached document is an important update on wetland replacement in relation to presettlement area designations and the priority order for siting.

Lateral Effect/Setback Tables

Recently, NRCS removed the 2012 drainage setback tables from their website. These tables were adopted for use by BWSR and the Corps per our 2013 Drainage Setback Guidance document. These tables are now available on the BWSR website on the Wetlands page along with an important note regarding their use (http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/delineation/lateral_effect_drainage.html). The note is as follows:

“BWSR and the St. Paul District Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) recommend that those using lateral effect/setback distances for purposes of the Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (404) first go to <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/mn/technical/?cid=nrcseprd1329935> on the Minnesota NRCS website to obtain current lateral effect information. For some soil types (e.g. soils known to have high organic content) users will be prompted to seek further assistance from NRCS staff. In those instances users should *not* seek NRCS staff assistance and should instead use the setback distance in the 2012 drainage setback tables above that BWSR and the Corps have adopted. NRCS can only provide technical support for USDA program eligibility, not WCA or 404 purposes. Users are reminded to review the above Drainage Setback Guidance concerning the use and limitations of drainage estimates.”

Minnesota Routine Assessment Method for Evaluating Wetland Function (MnRAM)

The 2010 Microsoft Access database version of MnRAM may not run on newer versions of Microsoft Access. BWSR no longer provides support for this version of MnRAM. As an alternative, BWSR recommends using the Excel Spreadsheet version of MnRAM which is still operational with current software. The MnRAM page on the BWSR website (<http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/mnram/index.html>) has been updated and simplified. BWSR and other agencies will be examining other methods and tools to improve wetland functional assessment for regulatory purposes in the near future.

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