



WETLAND MITIGATION FACT SHEET

RESTORE & REVITALIZE WWW.DELTALAND-SERVICES.COM

WHAT IS A WETLAND? An area that is regularly wet. And because of their special soggy conditions they are homes to many plants and animals dependent on them for their lifecycle and survival.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION:

The purpose of the Clean Water Act (CWA) is to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological functions of the Nation's waters. In order to achieve this objective, the CWA prohibits any development activity that adversely affects wetlands in the US unless approved by the Army Corps of Engineers or approved State via the issuance of a Section 404 permit.

All impacts to wetlands must be avoided and minimized as best as possible. For impacts that are unavoidable, compensatory mitigation is required to replace the loss of wetland and aquatic resource functions. Compensatory Mitigation refers to the restoration, establishment, enhancement, or in certain circumstances preservation of wetlands for the purpose of offsetting unavoidable adverse impacts.

Restoration: To re-establish or rehabilitate a wetland or other aquatic resource with the intention of returning natural or historic functions and characteristics to a previous or corrupted wetland. Restoration may result in a gain in wetland function or wetland acres, or both.

Establishment (Creation): To develop a wetland or other aquatic resource where a wetland did not previously exist. This is done through the manipulation of the physical, chemical and/or biological characteristics of the site. If successful, the result is a net gain in wetland acres and function.

Enhancement: To conduct activities in existing wetlands that heighten, intensify, or improve one or more wetland functions. Usually assumed for a specific purpose, such as to improve water quality, flood water retention or wildlife habitat. The result is gain in wetland function but not in a net gain in wetland acres.

Preservation: To permanently protect the ecologically important wetlands or other aquatic resources through the implementation of appropriate legal and physical mechanisms (i.e. conservation easements, title transfers). Preservation may include the protection of upland areas that are adjacent to wetlands in order to ensure protection or enhancement of the aquatic ecosystem. It can only be used in certain circumstances, including when the resources to be preserved contribute significantly to the ecological sustainability of the watershed.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION MECHANISMS USED TO OFFSET UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS:

Permittee-Responsible Mitigation (PRM): Mitigation that is taken on by a permittee in order to compensate for wetland impacts that result from a specific project. The permittee performs the mitigation after the permit is issued and is ultimately responsible for the implementation and success of the mitigation. PRMs may take place at the site of the permitted impacts or at an off-site location within the same watershed.

Mitigation Banking: A mitigation bank is a wetland area that has been mitigated (restored, established, enhanced or preserved) and set aside to compensate for future conversions of wetlands for development activities. With regulatory approval, permittees can purchase credits from a mitigation bank to meet their requirements for compensatory mitigation. The value of these "credits" is determined by quantifying the wetland functions or acres restored or created. The bank sponsor is ultimately responsible for the success of the project. Mitigation banking is done off-site but within the same watershed.