

Wisconsin Wetland Study Council (WSC)

WETLAND IDENTIFICATION AND DELINEATION COMMITTEE

Recommendation to improve the DNR Assured Delineator Program

July 15, 2021

The legislature stipulated that an action of the Wetland Study Council is to review and make recommendations on the Department of Natural Resources' wetland delineation professional assurance initiative (also referred to as the "Assured Delineator Program") (s. 15.347(22)(b)9, Wis. Stats.). This recommendation is a first step to improve the Assured Delineator Program.

The goal of the Assured Delineator Program is to provide consistent and accurate wetland boundary determinations for project planning while saving time in state review and oversight of these determinations. This private-public partnership is rooted in private delineators providing consistent, high-quality wetland delineations that are consistent with applicable state and federal standards, and DNR providing technical advice and oversight to those private delineators to maintain program integrity.

The Wetland Study Council finds that the Assured Delineator Program has been a successful partnership. Statutory authority would be beneficial to maintain the advantages of the program and to provide transparency and consistency for program expectations and eligibility. For these reasons, the Wetland Study Council recommends that the DNR maintain the Assured Delineator Program and continue to maintain the eligibility standards and expectations of this program.

The Wetlands Study Council also recommends that the Assured Delineator Program be codified in Wisconsin Statutes and be transitioned from a pilot program to a permanent program to ensure that DNR continues to manage this program.