

**POTENTIAL FRAMEWORKS FOR REPORTING ON
ECOLOGICAL CONDITION AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES
FOR THE 2011 NATIONAL WETLAND CONDITION ASSESSMENT**

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This document presents potential frameworks for reporting the results from the 2011 National Wetland Condition Assessment (NWCA) conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and its partners. We, first, provide background on the goals, objectives, and design of the NWCA and its relationship to other USEPA National Aquatic Resource Surveys (NARS). Next, we explore how the results of the 2011 NWCA might effectively be presented in a baseline report on national wetland condition within two frameworks. One addresses reporting on ecological condition; the other, ecosystem services.

The report of the results from the NWCA (targeted for completion in 2013) can parallel the existing NARS reports and augment those reports with new information. The NWCA report would, at minimum, include the major categories of results describing ecological condition that are found in the Wadeable Stream and Lake Assessment reports. Parallel result categories to be considered for NWCA reporting are: extent of the wetland resource, status of wetland ecological condition, extent of wetland area with detectable levels of toxic algae, extent of stressors, and relationship between stressors and ecological condition.

The NWCA can eventually report on condition in ways that are similar to the Wadeable Streams and Lakes Assessments. However, several constraints (e.g., the availability of autecological data and appropriate reference site data, and the research required for some analysis approaches) will influence the specific content for reporting on wetland condition. In addition, the NWCA has the capacity to report on additional aspects of the extent of the resource, ecological condition, and extent of stressors. The idea of using NARS data to address the delivery of ecosystem services is new and was addressed to a limited degree in the National Lakes Assessment's reporting on suitability for recreation, which the NWCA can also do. Additional reporting on delivery of services will require research. The efforts that are most developed support reporting on the maintenance of a habitable climate through documentation of the role of wetlands in carbon dynamics and on provision of water for consumption through documentation of the role of wetlands in denitrification.

This report demonstrates the wealth of information that can be produced by the NWCA for the 2013 report and going forward. It also highlights the value of the NWCA to the decision making that will govern the use, management, and protection of our wetland resource.