



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10**

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, WA 98101-3140

OFFICE OF
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL
AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

September 25, 2015

Mr. James Rypkema
Program Manager - Stormwater and Wetlands
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Division of Water, Wastewater Discharge Authorization Program
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501-2617

Dear Mr. Rypkema:

Thank you for your submission of the Alaska Wetland Program Plan (WPP or "Plan") to the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10. This WPP was developed under a Wetland Program Development Grant (WPDG) awarded to the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation in 2013 (EPA Grant No. CD-00J79501). This letter is to inform you that your submitted WPP has been approved by the EPA for the 2016 to 2018 time period.

While not required, the development of WPPs is strongly recommended by the EPA. The reason for this is to encourage state agencies and tribes to focus their wetland protection and restoration work in a more strategic way, while communicating their long and short term intent and needs to the EPA. WPPs can also help garner more support from within the state for advancing your wetland efforts. Finally, WPPs can help the EPA to more effectively develop, target and deliver technical and other assistance to help state agencies and tribes achieve their wetland and other aquatic resource goals.

Approved WPPs are made publicly available so that others may benefit from a state agency's or tribe's experience. Sharing your Plan will also allow potential partners, such as other local governments and universities, to understand your state's wetland program objectives and enable them to better assist you in achieving those goals. As part of our approval of the submitted Plan, the EPA will be posting it on our EPA wetland program website (<http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands/wpp.cfm>).

As you implement your WPP, the EPA wetland program staff will continue to be available to discuss the progress on the Plan's actions and activities, any technical assistance that the EPA can provide, and any future adjustments that the Plan may need. These Plan reviews can be done in concert with other EPA grant or program reviews, as appropriate. As your WPP nears the end of its time period, we ask that you consider completing a revised Plan with a new 3 to 6 year time period so that the state's efforts can stay current. If the WPP is not updated and expires, the state would not be eligible to compete under "Track One" of the EPA's Wetland Program Development Grant program – which is specifically for applicants carrying out actions in an approved Plan – until the EPA has approved an updated Plan. We would like you to think of the Plan as living documents, and consider all opportunities within your program to keep it updated. This would likely make future Plan renewals easier and much faster.

Thank you for your commitment to protecting and restoring the waters and ecosystems of EPA's Region 10. We look forward to working with you and to the environmental results gained by your WPP efforts.

If you have any questions, or wish to discuss this letter, you may reach me at (206) 553-0279 or by electronic mail at szierlog.michael@epa.gov, or you may contact Gayle Martin of my staff at (907) 271-5097 or by electronic mail at martin.gayle@epa.gov .

Sincerely,



Michael J. Szerlog, Manager
Aquatic Resources Unit

cc: Michelle Hale, Director
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation