A Cross Regional Collaboration to Enhance Non-Regulatory Wetland Protection and Program Elements: 
Project Summary & Workplan

Project description: The Wetlands Conservancy (Region 10), the Wisconsin Wetlands Association (Region 5), and the Montana Wetland Council (Region 8) each run successful and innovative voluntary wetland conservation and restoration programs. Using support from a National EPA Wetland Program Development Grant, the three groups will share information on the goals, successes and lessons learned from their programs with the wetland program partners from each state. This exchange of knowledge will occur through multi-day site visits involving state and federal agencies, local land trusts, tribes, local governments, and other partners and will culminate in recommendations for each state’s Wetland Program Managers.

Project findings and recommendations will also be summarized and shared with EPA’s Wetlands Strategies and State Programs Branch, EPA regional offices, and other State Wetland Program Managers.

Primary Objective - To strengthen implementation of the non-regulatory wetland restoration and protection priorities identified in the Oregon, Wisconsin, and Montana Wetland Program Plans.

Secondary Objective - To export lessons learned through the programs and project with EPA staff and state wetland program managers across the nation.

Activities:
- Three knowledge exchanges (one each in MT, OR, WI) to import lessons learned by the other two states and improve stakeholder engagement in voluntary wetland restoration and protection activities.
- Panel presentations or working groups at the annual State, Federal, Tribal Coordination Meeting of the Association of State Wetland Managers to solicit input on desired elements for outreach materials and to report on project findings and results.
- Development of recommendations and outreach materials describing proven strategies and recommended actions to effectively engage stakeholders in the development and implementation of voluntary restoration and protection elements of state Wetland Program Plans.

Outputs:
- An Outreach Piece for State Wetland Program Managers describing proven elements for an effective non-regulatory state wetland program, and highlighting voluntary wetland program successes from Oregon, Wisconsin, and Montana.
- Customized Wetland Program Development Recommendations for OR, WI, and MT on how to advance non-regulatory program goals in their state Wetland Program Plans.
- A final report to EPA summarizing activities, findings, and non-regulatory program recommendations.

Key Personnel:
Esther Lev - Executive Director, The Wetlands Conservancy, estherlev@wetlandsconservancy.org
Erin O’Brien - Policy Director, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, erin.obrien@wisconsinwetlands.org
Lynda Saul - Wetland Program Coordinator, Montana Dept. of Environmental Quality, lsaul@mt.gov