



# National Association of Wetland Managers

“Dedicated to the Protection and Restoration of the Nation’s Wetlands”

## An Opportunity to Encourage Federal Funding for State and Tribal Wetland Program Implementation

January 2024

Even as it argues over appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024, Congress is beginning consideration of appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2025 which begins on October 1, 2024. Now is an excellent opportunity for states and Tribes wishing for federal wetland program implementation funding to let their concerns be known.

Clean Water Act section 104(b)(3) is the primary source of federal funding for state and tribal wetland protection programs. That funding currently is interpreted as for use in program development only, and not for implementation. State and tribal agencies have needed to compete every two years for federal funding for development of new aspects of their wetland programs, and often face uncertainties as a result.

In recent months, NAWM and other state/tribal associations have been discussing the need for sustainable wetland program implementation funding. NAWM met in October with key Congressional authorizing and appropriations committee staff to discuss the importance of wetland protection programs, the issue of section 104(b)(3) funds being interpreted as for development only, and the critical need to increase wetland program funding over time. Wetland program funding under section 104(b)(3) has been flat for more than a decade at approximately \$14.5 million per year, and when adjusted for inflation current funding levels are a 22% reduction from ten years ago. Our request that Congress clarify in the near-term that section 104(b)(3) funds can be used for both program development and implementation was well-received. Our call for increased wetland program funding (particularly in light of *Sackett’s* rollback of federal protections) also was well-received although staff noted increased funding likely was a longer-term goal in light of appropriations chaos for Fiscal Year 2024. Staff emphasized the likelihood of clarifying section 104(b)(3) funding is available for program implementation, and building support for increased wetland program funding overall, would be greatly helped if states and Tribes wrote Congress to express their support.

If your state or Tribe supports use of section 104(b)(3) for wetland program implementation as well as development, and supports an increase in wetland program funding overall, please consider writing a letter to Congress to say so. Ideally, such a letter could portray your state or tribal efforts to protect wetlands, why such protection matters, and what benefits could result from increased federal funding. The letter could include a description of your state or Tribe’s current program protecting wetlands, the kinds of activities it covers (such as whether the program is regulatory or non-regulatory), how many staff and other resources the program currently has, and the source of current funding. The letter should explain the benefits of additional federal funding. For example, would more funding help improve permitting efficiency, or increase the availability of voluntary programs that increase incentives for wetland protection? The most effective letter would tell your state or tribal story, including how additional federal funding would improve future results.

If your state or Tribe is interested in writing a letter, where should the letter be sent? If your state or Tribe could more easily send a letter to NAWM telling your story, rather than a congressional office,

please feel free to do so and we will use it in our ongoing conversations with Congress. The ideal recipients of letters would be chairmen and ranking members of the authorizing and appropriations committees in the Senate and House of Representatives. You might also send a letter to your specific Senator or Congressman. NAWM would appreciate a copy of letters that you send directly to the Senate or House of Representatives for our tracking purposes. Names and addresses for key contacts include:

Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works (EPW):

Chairman Thomas R. Carper, (D-DE), *Ranking Member* Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV).  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510.

*Senate EPW Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water, and Wildlife:*

Subcommittee Chairman Alex Padilla (D-CA), *Ranking Member* Cynthia Lummis (R-WY)  
410 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510.

Senate Appropriations Committee:

*Chairman* Patty Murray (D-WA), *Ranking Member* Susan M. Collins (R-ME)  
Room S-128, The Capitol, Washington DC 20510.

*Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies.*

Subcommittee Chairman Jeff Merkley (D-OR), *Ranking Member* Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)  
Room S-128, The Capitol, Washington DC 20510

House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Committee:

*Chairman* Sam Graves (R-MO), *Ranking Member* Rick Larsen (D-WA).  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515

*House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment:*

*Subcommittee Chairman* David Rouzer (R-NC), *Ranking Member* Grace F. Napolitano (D-CA).  
585 Ford House Office Building, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515

House of Representatives Appropriations Committee

Chairman Kay Granger (R-TX), *Ranking Member* Rosa DeLauro (D-CT)  
H-307 The Capitol, Washington, DC 20515.

*House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, EPA, and Related Agencies*

Subcommittee Chairman Mike Simpson (R-ID), *Ranking Member* Chellie Pingree (D-ME)  
2007 Rayburn House Office Building, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington DC 20515

Names and addresses for your Senator or Representative can be found at [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) | [Library of Congress](https://www.libraryofcongress.gov).