

National Association of Home Builders

# Instituting a Challenge to a Plant's Indicator Status in the 2013 National Wetlands Plant List

Delaware Wetlands Conference

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Dover, DE

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# Delaware Wetlands Conference

## Outline

### ■ Background Information on the National Wetland Plant List

History

Use in Delineation

Examples of Delineations with New List

### ■ The Corps' "Challenge Process" for Plant Ratings

### ■ Data Requested by NAHB for 4 Plants in 4 Corps Regions

### ■ NAHB's Goals for the Challenge

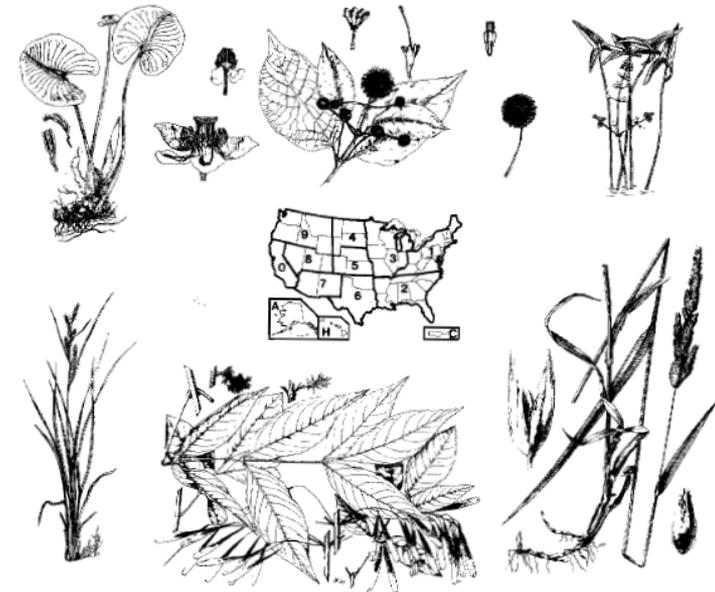
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## Background Information

- History of the Plant List
  - Hydrophyte – 1800s
    - Broadened – 1920
    - Reed – 1976
      - Fidelity Ratings Established
    - Reed Updated – 1982
    - Review Panels – 1984
      - Added “+, -”
      - Regionalized
      - 6,728 Listed Species
  - USACE - 2012 NWPL

BIOLOGICAL REPORT 88(24)  
SEPTEMBER 1988

## NATIONAL LIST OF PLANT SPECIES THAT OCCUR IN WETLANDS: 1988 NATIONAL SUMMARY



Fish and Wildlife Service

In Cooperation with the National and  
Regional Interagency Review Panels

**U.S. Department of the Interior**

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## Use in Wetland Delineation

- One of Three Parameters
- Fidelity Rankings (OBL – UPL)
  - **OBL** – Almost always occur in wetlands with few exceptions, these plants (Herbaceous and woody) are found in standing water or seasonally saturated soils (14 or more consecutive days) near the surface.
  - **FAC** – Occur in Wetlands and Non-Wetlands. These plants can grow in hydric, mesic and xeric habitats. The occurrence of these plants in different habitats represents responses to a variety of environmental variables other than just hydrology, such as shade tolerance, soil pH, and elevation, and they have a wide tolerance of soil moisture conditions.
- **Both Treated the Same in Delineation**

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## Consequences in Delineation

- Most Sussex County Plant Communities Are Wetland Communities
  - *Ilex opaca*
  - *Pinus Taeda*
  - *Lonicera japonica*
- Many drained hydric soils in this area
- Makes delineation much more costly



Tree Stratum (Plot size: 0.10 Acres)	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status
1. <i>Pinus taeda</i> (Pine,loblolly)	30	Y	FAC
2. <i>Prunus serotina</i> (Cherry,black)	20	Y	FACU
3. _____			
4. _____			
5. _____			
6. _____			
	50	= Total Cover	
50 % of total cover: 25	20	20 % of total cover: 10	

Sapling Stratum (Plot size: 0.10 Acres)	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status
1. <i>Prunus serotina</i> (Cherry,black)	30	Y	FACU
2. <i>Acer rubrum</i> (Maple,red)	10	Y	FAC
3. _____			
4. _____			
5. _____			
6. _____			
	40	= Total Cover	
50 % of total cover: 20	20	20 % of total cover: 8	

Shrub Stratum (Plot size: 0.10 Acres)	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status
1. <i>Acer negundo</i> (Box-elder)	10	Y	FACW
2. <i>Prunus serotina</i> (Cherry,black)	10	Y	FACU
3. _____			
4. _____			
5. _____			
6. _____			
	20	= Total Cover	
50 % of total cover: 10	10	20 % of total cover: 4	

Herb Stratum (Plot size: 0.10 Acres)	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status
1. <i>Lonicera japonica</i> (Honeysuckle,japanese)	40	Y	FAC
2. <i>Rosa multiflora</i> (Rose,multiflora)	40	Y	UPL
3. <i>Rubus allegheniensis</i> (Blackberry,alleggheny)	20		UPL
4. <i>Andropogon virginicus</i> (Broom-sedge)	10		FAC
5. _____			
6. _____			
7. _____			
8. _____			
9. _____			
10. _____			
11. _____			
	110	= Total Cover	
50 % of total cover: 55	22	20 % of total cover: 22	

Woody Vine Stratum (Plot size: 0.10 Acres)	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status
1. <i>Smilax rotundifolia</i> (Greenbrier,common)	5	Y	FAC
2. _____			
3. _____			

**Dominance Test worksheet:**

Number of Dominant Species That Are OBL, FACW, or FAC: 5 (A)

Total Number of Dominant Species Across All Strata: 9 (B)

Percent of Dominant Species That Are OBL, FACW, or FAC: 55.6 (A/B)

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**Prevalence Index worksheet:**

Total % Cover of: \_\_\_\_\_ Multiply by: \_\_\_\_\_

OBL species \_\_\_\_\_ x 1 = \_\_\_\_\_

FACW species \_\_\_\_\_ X 2 = \_\_\_\_\_

FAC species \_\_\_\_\_ X 3 = \_\_\_\_\_

FACU species \_\_\_\_\_ X 4 = \_\_\_\_\_

UPL species \_\_\_\_\_ X 5 = \_\_\_\_\_

Column Totals: \_\_\_\_\_ (A) \_\_\_\_\_ (B)

Prevalence Index = B/A = \_\_\_\_\_

**Hydrophytic Vegetation Indicators:**

1 – Rapid Test for Hydrophytic Vegetation

2 – Dominance Test is > 50%

3 – Prevalence Test is ≤ 3.0<sup>1</sup>

Problematic Hydrophytic Vegetation<sup>1</sup> (Explain)

<sup>1</sup>Indicators of hydric soil and wetland hydrology must be present, unless disturbed or problematic.

**Definitions of Vegetation Strata:**

**Tree** – Woody plants, excluding woody vines, approximately 20 ft (6 m) or more in height and 3 in. (7.6 cm) or larger in diameter at breast height (DBH).

**Sapling** – Woody plants, excluding woody vines, approximately 20 ft (6 m) or more in height and less than 3 in. (7.6 cm) DBH.

**Shrub** – Woody plants, excluding woody vines, approximately 3 to 20 ft (1 to 6 m) in height.

**Herb** – All herbaceous (non-woody) plants, including herbaceous vines, regardless of size. Includes woody plants, except woody vines, less than approximately 3 ft (1 m) in height.

**Woody vine** – All woody vines, regardless of height.

Tree Stratum (Plot size: 0.10 Acres )	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status	Dominance Test worksheet:
1. <u>Acer rubrum (Maple,red)</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>FAC</u>	Number of Dominant Species That Are OBL, FACW, or FAC: <u>3</u> (A)  Total Number of Dominant Species Across All Strata: <u>5</u> (B)  Percent of Dominant Species That Are OBL, FACW, or FAC: <u>60</u> (A/B)
2. <u>Liquidambar styraciflua (Gum,sweet)</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>FAC</u>	
3. _____				
4. _____				
5. _____				
6. _____				
70 = Total Cover				
50 % of total cover: <u>35</u>		20 % of total cover: <u>14</u>		
Sapling Stratum (Plot size: 0.10 Acres)	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status	Prevalence Index worksheet:
1. <u>Acer rubrum (Maple,red)</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>FAC</u>	Total % Cover of: _____ Multiply by: OBL species _____ x 1 = _____ FACW species _____ X 2 = _____ FAC species _____ X 3 = _____ FACU species _____ X 4 = _____ UPL species _____ X 5 = _____ Column Totals: _____ (A) _____ (B)  Prevalence Index = B/A = _____
2. _____				
3. _____				
4. _____				
5. _____				
6. _____				
10 = Total Cover				
50 % of total cover: <u>5</u>		20 % of total cover: <u>2</u>		
Shrub Stratum (Plot size: 0.10 Acres)	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status	Hydrophytic Vegetation Indicators:
1. <u>Rosa multiflora (Rose,multiflora)</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>FACU</u>	___ 1 – Rapid Test for Hydrophytic Vegetation X 2 – Dominance Test is > 50% ___ 3 – Prevalence Test is $\leq 3.0^1$ ___ Problematic Hydrophytic Vegetation <sup>1</sup> (Explain)  <sup>1</sup> Indicators of hydric soil and wetland hydrology must be present, unless disturbed or problematic.
2. <u>Acer rubrum (Maple,red)</u>	<u>5</u>		<u>FAC</u>	
3. <u>Fagus grandifolia (Beech)</u>	<u>5</u>		<u>FAC</u>	
4. <u>Prunus serotina (Cherry,black)</u>	<u>5</u>		<u>FACU</u>	
5. <u>Vaccinium corymbosum (Blueberry,highbush)</u>	<u>5</u>		<u>FACW</u>	
6. _____				
100 = Total Cover				
50 % of total cover: <u>50</u>		20 % of total cover: <u>20</u>		
Herb Stratum (Plot size: 0.10 Acres)	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status	Definitions of Vegetation Strata:
1. <u>Allium vineale (Garlic,field)</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>FACU</u>	<b>Tree</b> – Woody plants, excluding woody vines, approximately 20 ft (6 m) or more in height and 3 in. (7.6 cm) or larger in diameter at breast height (DBH).  <b>Sapling</b> – Woody plants, excluding woody vines, approximately 20 ft (6 m) or more in height and less than 3 in. (7.6 cm) DBH.  <b>Shrub</b> – Woody plants, excluding woody vines, approximately 3 to 20 ft (1 to 6 m) in height.  <b>Herb</b> – All herbaceous (non-woody) plants, including herbaceous vines, regardless of size. Includes woody plants, except woody vines, less than approximately 3 ft (1 m) in height.  <b>Woody vine</b> – All woody vines, regardless of height.
2. <u>Duchesnea indica (Mock-strawberry,indian)</u>	<u>10</u>		<u>FACU</u>	
3. <u>Lonicera japonica (Honeysuckle,japanese)</u>	<u>5</u>		<u>FAC</u>	
4. _____				
5. _____				
6. _____				
7. _____				
8. _____				
9. _____				
10. _____				
11. _____				
65 = Total Cover				
50 % of total cover: <u>32.5</u>		20 % of total cover: <u>13</u>		
Woody Vine Stratum (Plot size: _____)	Absolute % Cover	Dominant Species?	Indicator Status	Hvdronhvtic
1. _____				
2. _____				
3. _____				

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## ■ Background Information

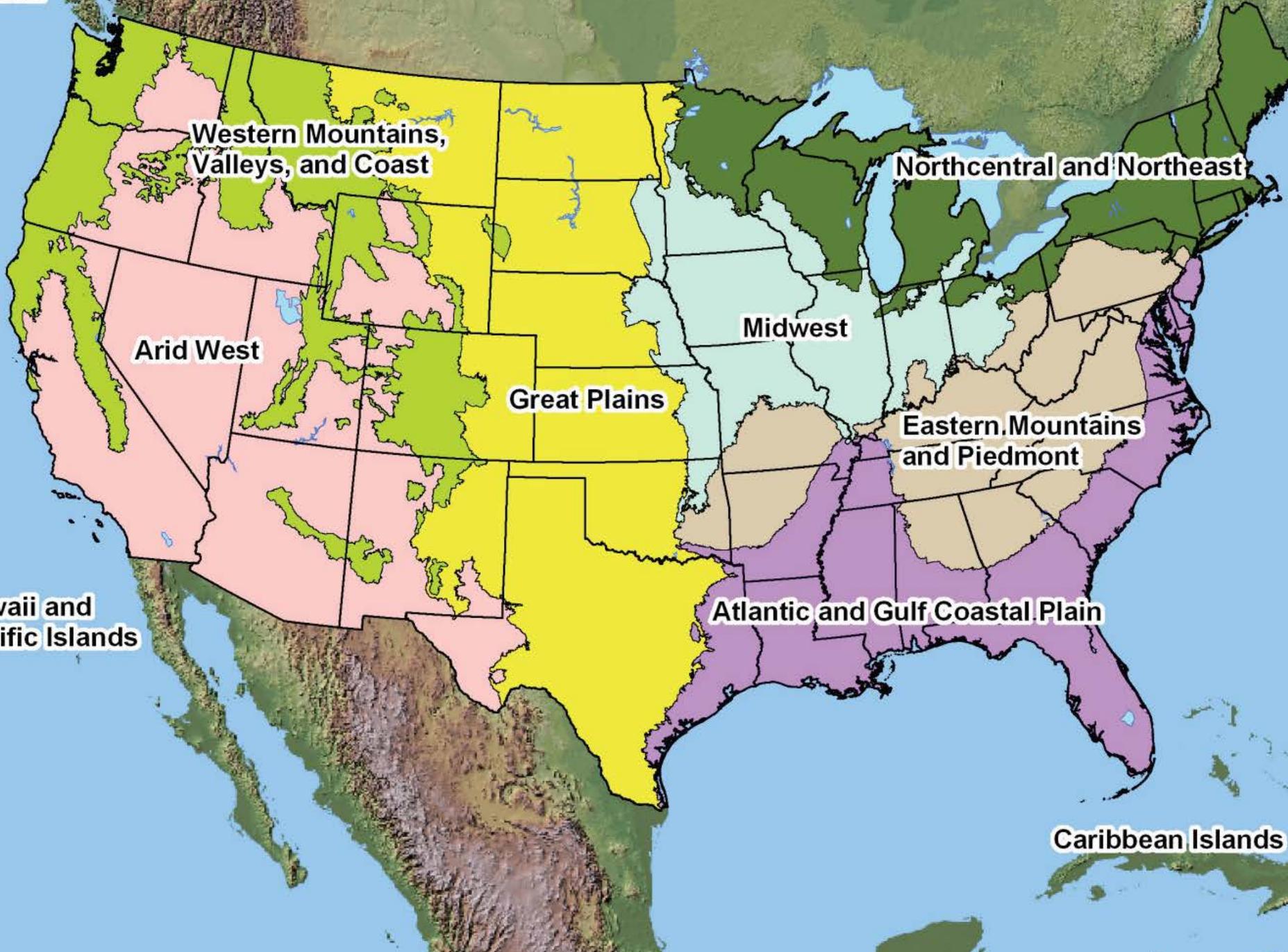
- Thousands of wetland delineations/year are done for home builders
- Home builders constitute a large portion of the Corp's permitting work
- Wetland decisions are important for the environment and for home builders and property owners

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- The Corps' Challenge Process for Plant Ratings
  - The Corps is committed to annual updating of the NWPL
  - The Challenge Process for changing a plant's rating is on the Corps' website; but in draft form and the document is incomplete
  - Challenges from the public are accepted during 2 windows each year: January 1 – March 31 and June 1 – August 31

Alaska

Hawaii and  
Pacific Islands



Western Mountains,  
Valleys, and Coast

Arid West

Great Plains

Midwest

Northcentral and Northeast

Eastern Mountains  
and Piedmont

Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain

Caribbean Islands

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- Data requested by NAHB in January 2014:

Common Name	Scientific Name	Rating	Corps Region
Perennial/Italian Rye Grass	Lolium perenne	Facultative	Arid West
Mule's Fat	Baccaris salicifolia	Facultative	Arid West
Kentucky Blue Grass	Poa pratensis	Facultative	Midwest
Japanese Honeysuckle	Lonicera japonica	Facultative	EMP and AGCP

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## ■ NAHB Goals for the Plant List Challenges

1. Improve the ratings for 4 problematic plants
2. Explore the challenge process in order to assist home builders in specific states with other problematic plant rankings

# Thank You

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