



US Army Corps
of Engineers
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Special Public Notice

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ANNOUNCEMENT: Interim Procedures for Completing an Eelgrass Delineation and Characterization Report - Now Available

BACKGROUND: This document provides technical procedures for characterizing and delineating eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) that may be subject to regulatory jurisdiction under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C.1344) or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 U.S.C.403). Eelgrass is a type of seagrass occurring in shallow coastal areas, such as along the shoreline or in bays and estuaries. Eelgrass provides many ecosystem services and has one of the highest primary productivity rates of any habitat. Eelgrass can be foraging, spawning, nursery, and migratory areas for many marine species, including commercially important fish and invertebrates, marine mammals, and waterfowl and is known to stabilize the substrate and sequester carbon. Vegetated shallows supporting eelgrass are considered special aquatic sites under the 404(b)(1) Guidelines of the Clean Water Act (40 C.F.R. § 230.43).

PURPOSE: The interim procedures have been developed to assist applicants and/or their consultants within the geographic area covered by the Regulatory Branch of the Seattle District, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers when a characterization or delineation of eelgrass is needed to evaluate proposed work within marine waters. By clarifying the procedures, we hope to increase the efficiency of the regulatory program and streamline review of proposed projects. This document is also intended to be a “living document” to reflect the current knowledge of eelgrass in Washington State.

To view the *Components of a Complete Eelgrass Delineation and Characterization Report*, please visit our website at <http://www.nws.usace.army.mil>, select Regulatory Branch Permit Information, then Forms.