



# Aquatic Resource Management

## Advance Aquatic Resource Plans

Through participating in Regional Solutions Teams around the state, the Department of State Lands received input from many communities about the need to better anticipate and resolve issues related to development on wetlands. Communities want to improve the permit process to more effectively capitalize on new business opportunities *before* a project becomes viable.

In response, the Department adopted in 2014 an administrative rule (OAR 141-085-0768) creating a new wetland planning tool called the **Advance Aquatic Resource Plan (Advance Plan)**. The objective of these plans is to:

- Create a flexible framework for communities to voluntarily plan for anticipated future wetland/development conflicts within a defined planning area.
- Identify and characterize wetland resources in advance of site-by-site wetland permit application requirements.
- Make strategic decisions early to balance the needs for important wetland resources protection and the needs for economic development within the community.
- Create a comprehensive wetland mitigation strategy for those wetlands that are planned for future development.

This new planning tool provides communities broad discretion in defining the objectives and content of their plans to address local needs. The Department's approval of an Advance Plan provides regulatory outcomes for the planning area including:

- Wetland delineation approvals
- Simplified removal-fill permit application requirements
- Reduced removal-fill permit application processing timelines
- Consideration of the approved Plan by removal-fill staff when making final permit decisions

An Advance Plan is different than a Wetland Conservation Plan in several key regards:

- Landowners agree to participate in Advance Plan development voluntarily.
- An approved Advance Plan is not a local land use decision.
- An Advance Plan will consider both wetland protection and community development needs when making decisions about those areas that will be protected and those areas that will be developable under the Plan.
- Use of the final Advance Plan by individual project developers is also voluntary. Developers may always default to the standard wetland permit process if the Plan does not accommodate individual project needs.
- An Advance Plan cannot authorize any wetland removal-fill activity within the planning area.

### **Additional information:**

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