

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

# FY 2011 National Water Program End of Year Performance by Subobjective

The following chapters provide a summary of the progress made toward accomplishing environmental and program goals for each subobjective described in the *FY 2011 National Water Program Guidance*. Each subobjective chapter includes the following information:

- A brief summary of overall performance in 2011 and the previous four years for measures under each subobjective.
- A description of performance highlights, including what commitments were met and what factors contributed to success.
- A description of management challenges, if appropriate, identifying key factors that led to measures not being met and next steps to improve performance for the future.

Each subobjective section focuses primarily on measures with FY 2011 commitments. Indicator measures are discussed where trends significantly differ from previous year's results. Annual Commitment System (ACS) measure codes (e.g., SP-1) are provided in the text in parentheses.

## Key for Reading Performance Measure Charts and Tables

For all charts with national trend results, commitments are reflected by blue trend lines and results by vertical bars. For charts with regional FY 2011 results, a dotted line (in orange) indicates the national FY 2011 commitment for that particular measure. Although regions use the national commitment as a point of reference in setting their annual commitments, regional commitments may vary based on specific conditions within each region. Green bars in both national and regional charts identify commitments met, and red bars identify measures not met. A purple bar indicates that the Agency did not set a commitment for that year.

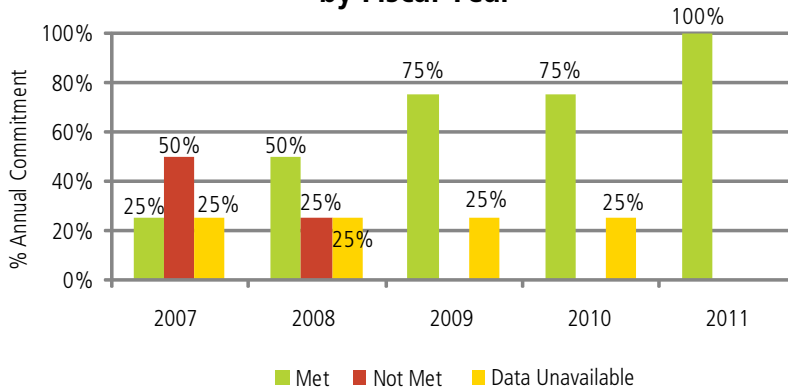
For the measure summary tables in each subobjective chapter, a green "up" arrow means that a measure met its FY 2011 commitment, and a red "down" arrow indicates that the annual commitment was not met. The letter "I" means that the measure is an indicator measure and did not have an annual commitment for FY 2011. Measures without data or not reporting in FY 2011 are indicated by "Data Unavailable." An "LT" symbol notes that the measure has a long-term goal and does not have an annual commitment. A gold star (★) in the past trends column highlights that the measure has met its annual commitment 100% of the time over the past four or five years. And finally, the appendix number represents the page in Appendix D (A-00) on the website where additional details about the measure can be found, and the figure number is the number of the chart in the chapter.



 **Subobjective: Wetlands**

EPA's Wetlands Program has shown gradual improvement in its performance over the past five years. EPA reported on and met all of its commitments under this subobjective in FY 2011 (Figure 47).

**Figure 47: Wetlands Subobjective Five-Year Trend by Fiscal Year**



FY 2011 ACS Code	Abbreviated Measure Description	Commitment Met/Not Met (I = Indicator) (Data Unavailable = No Data/Not Reporting) (LT = Long-Term Target)	Past Trends: # of Years Met	Appendix Page Number (D-0)/ Figure Number
<b>Subobjective 4.3.2 Wetlands</b>				
SP-21	Net increase wetlands achieved	LT		D-44
SP-22	No net loss of wetlands	▲	3/3	D-45
WT-1	Wetland acres restored and enhanced	▲	5/5 ★	D-45
WT-2a	States and tribes that have increased capacity in one or more core elements	I		D-46
WT-2b	Number of core elements developed by states and tribes	I		D-46
WT-3	404 permits with greater environmental protection	I		D-47
WT-4	States wetland condition trend has been measured	▲	4/5	D-47

## FY 2010 Performance Highlights and Management Challenges

Wetlands are among our nation's most critical and productive natural resources. They provide a variety of benefits, including water quality improvements, flood protection, shoreline erosion control, and ground water exchange. Wetlands are the primary habitat for fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife; as such, they provide numerous opportunities for education, recreation, and research. EPA recognizes that the nation faces daunting challenges to conserve our wetland heritage and that many partners must work together for this effort to succeed.

**No Net Loss and the Number of Wetland Acres Restored/Enhanced:** In 2011, EPA, in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, states, and tribes, achieved "no net loss" of wetlands under the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 regulatory program (SP-22). EPA continues to achieve this commitment through regional involvement and coordination in reviewing Section 404 permits issued by the Corps.

EPA continues to exceed expectations in the number of acres of wetlands restored and enhanced, with 154,000 cumulative acres restored and enhanced since 2002 (WT-1). EPA has exceeded its commitment under this measure every year since 2004. The commitment is achieved through the combined efforts of local groups to restore wetlands under EPA funding programs. It is difficult to determine an accurate number of habitat acres that will be improved and restored in the coming year because projects can sometimes take a number of years to design, fund, implement, and complete. Nevertheless, EPA has seen a long enough trend to be able to forecast improvements.

**State and Tribal Wetlands Program Capacity:** As of FY 2011, 54 states and tribes have built capacities in the core program elements of wetlands monitoring, regulation, voluntary restoration and protection, and wetland water quality standards (WT-2a,b). This measure was changed in 2010 to gauge the number of states and tribes that have built the core elements of their programs (WT-2a) and have reached the point of managing fully functional wetland programs. The new measure tracks closely with EPA's Core Elements Framework for State and Tribal Wetlands Program, which provides a more objective basis for measurement.

**Number of States Measuring Trends in Condition:** The number of states where the trend in wetland condition has been measured, as defined through biological metrics and assessments, increased from 22 states in FY 2010 to 29 states in FY 2011 (WT-4). This measure currently counts states that are "on track" to assess trends in wetland condition for at least 20% of their state by the end of FY 2011. Trends assessment involves establishing a baseline, then reassessing the same areas to evaluate trends. The increase among states in building wetlands monitoring programs is due to a number of factors, including 1) active participation by approximately 40 states on the National Wetlands Monitoring and Assessment Work Group, 2) involvement of eight EPA regions in the Regional Wetlands Monitoring Work Groups that facilitate data and information sharing, and 3) EPA's collaboration with states to plan the 2011 National Wetland Condition Assessment.

EPA was unable to report on the net increase of acres of wetlands for FY 2011 (SP-21). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service completed a *Status and Trends Report* with the latest wetlands results in October FY 2011, but the report was not available by the end of FY 2011. The result for this measure, however, does not represent real-time annual data. The previous *Status and Trends Report* was issued in 2005 and reported that the United States gained approximately 32,000 wetland acres annually from 1998 to 2004. For FY 2008, EPA applied the 32,000 acres as the wetland gain rate and reported cumulatively from the baseline year in 2005. The *Status and Trends Report* that was completed in October 2011 discusses the timeframe between FY 2005 and FY 2009 and will be used for reporting in FY 2012.