

Water WoRDs

Updates from the Water Resources Division

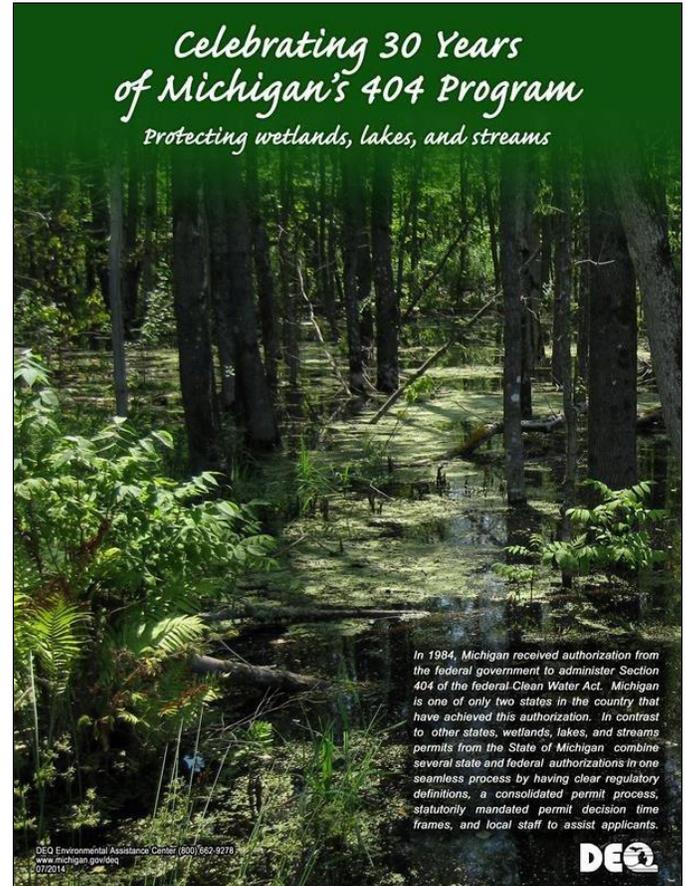


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Celebrating 30 Years of Michigan's 404 Program Protecting Wetlands, Lakes, and Streams

This fall marks 30 years since Michigan received authorization from the federal government to administer Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, commonly called the "wetlands program." Michigan is one of only two states in the country that have achieved this authorization, allowing its wetlands, lakes and streams permits to combine several state and federal authorizations in one seamless process. Michigan's Section 404 Program provides the residents of the state many benefits over the federally administered program, including having clear regulatory definitions, a consolidated permit process, statutorily mandated permit decision time frames, and local staff to assist applicants.

Michigan's Section 404 Wetlands Program operates under a Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Because Michigan has successfully administered the Section 404 program for 30 years, many people are unaware that the wetlands, lakes and streams program is tied to, and must be consistent with, Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act.



Michigan Wetlands Association Annual Conference: New Directions in Wetland Protection and Management

As part of the 30th anniversary celebrations, the DEQ is participating in the Michigan Wetlands Association 2014 Conference, held Aug. 27-29 at the Amway Grand Plaza in Grand Rapids. The association is a statewide, non-profit organization of dedicated to the protection and restoration of wetlands and associated ecosystems through science-based programs, education and stewardship. Director Dan Wyant will be a keynote speaker on the first day of the conference, and the DEQ is sponsoring a special concurrent session on updates and information regarding Michigan's wetlands program.

The conference will focus on wetland topics such as emerging science, state and federal regulation, and conservation programs. Joining Director Wyant as keynote speakers are U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow, Grand Rapids Mayor George Heartwell, The Windquest Group President Dick DeVos, and

US EPA Region 5 Director of the Water Division Tinka Hyde. The conference also offers a number of opportunities for networking and fun, including exhibits, field trips, a Waterfowl Legacy Workshop presented by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and social events to encourage the exchange of current information. The conference is open to both members and non-members. The full agenda and information regarding registration, sponsorship and exhibits is available on the Michigan Wetlands Association website at www.miwetlands.org.

What do you do in the WRD? Meet Amy Berry

Amy Berry is the DEQ's Part 303, Wetland Protection Program policy coordinator. She serves as a technical and regulatory resource for DEQ staff and the public statewide to provide guidance and policy development for the best protection and management of Michigan's wetland resources. She interacts with various program stakeholders on policy issues and administers the newly formed Agricultural Assistance Program that assists the agricultural community with wetland regulatory requirements and provides education and outreach on the importance of wetland protection. Amy assists with field staff training on a number of topics and serves as chair on the WRD's 303 Committee. Prior to working at the DEQ, Amy worked for 15 years in wetland and ecosystem management with state and federal governments, private consulting firms, non-profit agencies, and other conservation groups.

