



**Blackfoot Tribe's Wetland Program Plan for Fiscal Years 2021 to 2026**



## Wetland Program Plan Overview

This Wetland Program Plan (WPP) is being developed with funding from EPA Wetland Program Development Grant #CD - 95810200 - 0. The project period is May 1, 2021 to September 30, 2023 with the funding awarded September 4, 2021.

The overall goal of the Blackfeet Tribe's Wetlands Program is to ensure no-net-loss of the outstanding biological, aquatic and cultural values of Blackfeet wetlands through voluntary restoration and protection, appropriate mitigation, monitoring and assessment, regulation, and wetland water quality standards; and to conserve wetlands and associated natural resources using improved managerial tools.

The Blackfeet Tribe's updated Wetland Program Plan (WPP) includes managerial guidance and definitive actions and activities for a six-year period (2021-2026). After three years (in 2024) a review will be conducted by tribal and Environmental Protection Program (EPA) staff to revise and adjust the plan if necessary. The Tribal comprehensive Wetland Program Plan (WPP) will integrate the following Core Elements to achieve **no net loss of existing wetlands** over the next six years:

- 1) Monitoring and Assessment
- 2) Voluntary Protection and Restoration
- 3) Regulatory Activities
- 4) Water Quality Standards for Wetlands

From 2012 to 2016, the Blackfeet Environmental Office Wetlands Program conducted a four-year rotating watershed wetland monitoring study. A total of 135 wetlands were monitored and assessed over four years. Results from this project allowed for improved wetland protection and identified the need to improve and update wetland maps. Previous data and project work will be incorporated into updated mapping and wetland protection and restoration goals.

The Blackfeet Tribe's updated WPP (2021-2026) specifically addresses all wetlands for protection and regulation. We will achieve this goal by collaborating with project partners and developing updated wetland mapping in selected USGS Topographic Quads. Improved mapping technology will allow us to effectively manage, protect and restore wetlands of the Blackfeet Reservation. Wetland Program Plan deliverables will lead to increased protection, regulation and restoration of Tribal wetlands that will ultimately improve wetland condition and water quality. Updated mapping will provide data that will improve decision-making, wetland resource management and collaborative protection and restoration work with our partners.

We will conduct a comprehensive review and comparison of the definitions of "waters of the Tribe" and "waters of the US" (WOTUS) to more effectively manage and protect the Tribe's wetland and aquatic resources. Wetland Program goals, objectives and activities will also support the Blackfeet Tribe's Climate Change Adaptation Plan, cultural resource protection goals, wildlife management goals, as well as the following Blackfeet

Environmental Office Programs: Water Quality, Non-point Source, Brownfields, Aquatic Lands Protection and Air Quality.

The Blackfeet Environmental Office has been without a Wetlands Program Manager for the past four years. The vast wetland resources of the Reservation need oversight, management, and protection to address wetland impacts and loss associated with highway reconstruction and other infrastructure development projects. We have also identified the need to develop a wetland mitigation guidebook that will serve as a training guide for other wetland managers to successfully implement and manage wetland mitigation projects. This guidebook will be shared with other tribes and states. Proposed activities will reflect these emerging priorities to protect local and regional wetland resources, improve wetland mitigation results, prevent water pollution and guide decision making.

### **Summary: Wetland Program (2021-2026) Work Plan**

Mapping data and products will be produced during the first three years. Additional quads will be mapped during the last three years if funding is secured. During Years one-three, data and products will include the following: 1) Eight updated Topographic Quad Maps, 2) Reservation wetland map identifying rare and vulnerable and degraded or damaged wetlands for protection and restoration and 3) A map identifying potential wetland mitigation sites to compensate for wetland loss. Data will be shared with project partners. During years two and three, we will intensively train a new Wetlands Program Manager and in Year four we will develop a guidebook for Wetland Mitigation.

This WPP will be reviewed by the Tribe's Legal Department, approved by the Tribal Council, and submitted to EPA for their approval. The new Wetlands Program Manager trainee position will be advertised after November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, with a goal of having the trainee start work in December 2022. The QAPP approval process will be emphasized to the trainee.

<b>YR 1 (2021)</b>	<b>YR 2 (2022)</b>	<b>YR 3 (2023)</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Produce 4 updated Topo Quads	Produce 4 updated Topo Quads	Produce wetland map identifying potential wetland mitigation, restoration and protection sites	January- December annually	EMMA
Field work to Verify and Ground Truth Wetlands (rare, vulnerable, impacted, unmapped NWI)	Field work to Verify and Ground Truth Wetlands (rare, vulnerable, impacted, unmapped NWI)	Field work to Verify and Ground Truth Wetlands for protection and as potential wetland mitigation or restoration sites	July of year two- October annually	BEO Wetlands and Contract Ecologist
Map Data to Blackfeet Tribe (BEO, Fish and Wildlife, Lands Depts)	Map Data to Blackfeet Tribe (BEO, Fish and Wildlife, Lands Depts)	Transfer map data to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (NWI)  Transfer map data to Montana Natural Heritage Program and the Montana State Library's Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) on an as-needed basis upon written request.	May 2023	EMMA
		Hire and train new Wetlands Program Manager	December 2023 - December 2024	BEO Wetlands and Contractor, Project Partners
Write Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP)			March 2022	BEO Wetlands, EMMA, EPA
		Develop relationships with restoration/mitigation specialists	August 2023	BEO Wetlands
-----	-----	Review WOTUS Ruling and utilize data to develop Waters of the Tribe Definition	December 2023	BEO Wetlands and Contract Ecologist
-----	-----	Produce draft wetland protection and restoration report based on updated mapping and field work results.	December 2023	BEO Wetlands and Contract Ecologist
Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation	Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation	Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation	On-going	BEO Wetlands, EPA, and Contractor

<b>YR 4 (2024)</b>	<b>YR 5 (2025)</b>	<b>YR 6 (2026)</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
-----	-----	Review project results Years 1-5, update Wetland Program Plan for next six-year period and submit to EPA.	June 2026	BEO Wetlands, EPA
Produce additional updated Topo Quads	Produce additional updated Topo Quads	Produce additional updated Topo Quads	January- December annually	EMMA
Verify and Ground Truth Wetlands (rare, vulnerable, impacted, unmapped NWI)	Verify and Ground Truth Wetlands (rare, vulnerable, impacted, unmapped NWI)	Verify and Ground Truth Wetlands for protection and as potential wetland mitigation or restoration sites	June-October annually	BEO Wetlands and Contractor
Map Data to Blackfeet Tribe (BEO, Fish and Wildlife, Lands Depts)	Map Data to Blackfeet Tribe (BEO, Fish and Wildlife, Lands Depts)	Map data to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (NWI) Map data to Montana Natural Heritage Program and the Montana State Library	May- December annually	EMMA
-----	Develop methodology to identify and prioritize wetlands for restoration and protection and create a prioritized list of wetlands for restoration/protection.	Produce final wetland protection and restoration report based on updated mapping and field work results.	December 2025 and December 2026	BEO Wetlands and Contractor
Develop Draft Wetland Mitigation Guidebook for the Blackfeet Reservation	-----	Develop Final Wetland Mitigation Guidebook for printing and distribution	December 2026	BEO Wetlands and Contractor
Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation	Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation	Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation	On-going	BEO Wetlands, EPA, and Contractor
Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University of Montana for updating wetland mapping	-----	-----	June 2024	BEO Wetlands, EMMA, Contractor
Summarize all past wetland monitoring and assessment data and enter in database	-----	-----	December 2024	BEO Wetlands, Contractor

YR 4 (2024)	YR 5 (2025)	YR 6 (2026)	Dates	Responsible Party
-----	-----	Develop methodology for classifying, assessing and monitoring wetlands that exhibit a temporary hydroperiod	December 2026	BEO Wetlands, Contract Ecologist

## **2) Actions and Activities Supporting Overall Goal, with Schedule:**

### ***Year One (FY 2021) 10/1/20-9/30/21:***

**Action:** Coordinate with the University of Montana’s Ecological Mapping, Monitoring and Analysis (EMMA) group to select and update the wetland and riparian mapping for four topographic quad maps on the Blackfeet Reservation.

#### **Activities:**

- Produce 4 updated Topo Quads.
- Perform field visits to ground truth wetlands that are difficult to classify from aerial images, rare, vulnerable, impacted, and not mapped by NWI. Delineations will not be done.
- Perform field visits to wetlands identified by EMMA as potential conservation/protection sites and assess them using the MTNHP protocol (2019).
- Transfer updated map data to Blackfeet Tribe (BEO, Fish and Wildlife, Lands Depts).

**Action:** Develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) in collaboration with EMMA.

#### **Activities:**

- Develop draft QAPP for US EPA review and comment.
- Incorporate review comments and revisions and submit final draft QAPP to US EPA.
- Use final EPA-approved QAPP to guide all mapping and field data collection activities.

**Action:** Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and prepare for future projects coming down the line under all media programs.

#### **Activities:**

- The BEO will develop an end of year review that includes all the media programs and focuses on projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation in the coming year.
- Review all Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinance 117 (ALPO) (2019) permit applications for potential wetland impacts.
- Review proposed homesite leases and road construction projects to determine wetland acreage impacts.
- Evaluate and enforce wetland mitigation performance standards for impacted wetlands within the watershed.
- Utilize Blackfeet Regulations to address wetland impacts and loss associated with infrastructure projects.

## ***Year Two (FY 2022) 10/1/21-9/30/22:***

**Action:** Coordinate with the University of Montana’s Ecological Mapping, Monitoring and Analysis (EMMA) group to select and update the wetland and riparian mapping for four topographic quad maps on the Blackfeet Reservation.

### **Activities:**

- Produce 4 updated Topo Quads.
- Perform field visits to ground truth wetlands that are difficult to classify from aerial images, rare, vulnerable, impacted, and not mapped by NWI. Delineations will not be done.
- Perform field visits to wetlands identified by EMMA as potential conservation/protection sites and assess them using the MTNHP protocol (2019).
- Transfer updated map data to Blackfeet Tribe (BEO, Fish and Wildlife, Lands Depts).

**Action:** Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and prepare for future projects coming down the line under all media programs.

### **Activities:**

- The BEO will develop an end of year review that includes all the media programs and focuses on projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation in the coming year.
- Review all Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinance 117 (ALPO) (2019) permit applications for potential wetland impacts.
- Review proposed homesite leases and road construction projects to determine wetland acreage impacts.
- Evaluate and enforce wetland mitigation performance standards for impacted wetlands within the watershed.
- Utilize Blackfeet Regulations to address wetland impacts and loss associated with infrastructure projects.

## **YEAR 3 (FY 2023) 10/1/22-9/30/23:**

**Action:** Review “waters of the United States” (WOTUS) rulings, tribal definitions of “waters”, and Tribal water protection laws to update regulatory mechanisms and define legal waters of the Blackfeet Tribe.

### **Activities:**

- Utilize updated mapping to address ephemeral, intermittent, temporary and isolated wetlands in each quad that do not currently have protection under the CWA.
- Conduct a legal and scientific literature search to assist in developing the legal definition of “waters of the Tribe”.



- Prepare educational toolkits for the Browning Public Schools and educational tool links for the Blackfeet Environmental Office website.
- Present information on revised “waters of the Tribe” definition to a Region-wide wetlands meeting and to the Regional Operations Committee (Tribal Region 8 group).
- Review and revise current definition of “waters of the Tribe” if necessary to make it more inclusive than WOTUS.
- If necessary, develop and adopt procedure to extend tribal government jurisdiction to aquatic resources that are not “waters of the US” (e.g., isolated wetlands).
- If the Tribal Council and tribal attorneys agree, standardize all water related regulatory programs so they use the same definition of “waters of the Tribe”.
- If necessary, address wetland-related projects not currently protected under the most recent revision of the WOTUS ruling.

**Action:** The Blackfeet Tribe Wetlands Program will hire and train a Wetlands Program Manager Trainee and develop partnerships with other agencies to improve and develop the Trainee’s skills in wetland mapping, ecology, delineation and management.

**Activities:**

- The Trainee will be trained to perform regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and develop skills in 401 Certification for any CWA 404 activities occurring on the Blackfeet Reservation. Training in Helena for staff.
- The Wetland Program Trainee will attend intensive field and technology courses arranged by partnerships with other agencies and non-profits; such as US EPA, Montana Heritage Program, Montana Wetlands Mapping Center, and the Montana Wetlands Council.
- The trainee will develop collaborative projects with other partners to implement wetland restoration and protection projects, using other funding sources.
- The trainee will continue to develop improved wetland resource and technology skills to effectively manage and protect Blackfeet wetland resources.

**Action:** Establish wetland restoration and protection goals that are compatible across relevant agencies.

**Activities:**

- Develop relationships with restoration/mitigation specialists.
- Coordinate with relevant agencies that outline restoration/protection goals and strategies and timeframes.
- Gather information on wetland location, class and condition/functions by compiling information from all previous wetland surveys and studies on the Reservation.
- Set restoration and protection goals based on Tribal objectives and available information.
- Produce draft wetland protection and restoration report based on updated mapping and field work results.

- Use wetland mapping project results (Years 1-3) to develop potential wetland protection and restoration projects using other funding sources and produce a map identifying wetlands as potential protection, restoration or mitigation sites in each watershed.
- Enter all data from this year's field work into database at the Blackfeet Environmental Office.

**Action:** Utilize maps to identify all potential wetland protection, restoration and mitigation sites in updated quads on the Blackfeet Reservation. Monitor selected wetlands in each updated quad using the Montana Natural Heritage Program's (MTNHP) Ecological Integrity Assessment Protocol (2019). Do ground-truthing using EMMA protocol.

**Activities:**

- Conduct wetland monitoring and assessment and field verification in potential protection, restoration or mitigation sites using the MTNHP wetland assessment protocol (2019).
- Coordinate with project partners to verify and assess questionable wetlands that cannot be accurately mapped or classified by remote sensing using EMMA protocol.
- Collaborate with project partners on identifying additional wetlands for mapping updates and selection of potential protection, restoration and mitigation sites in each updated quad.
- Enter all data from monitoring and assessment into selected database.

**Action:** When developing the Tribe's selection process for restoration/protection sites by using updated wetland maps and assessment data, incorporate Tribal watershed planning, the Tribe's Climate Adaptation Plan, cultural natural resources, wetland protection, wildlife management, and other objectives.

**Activities:**

- Identify rare, vulnerable, or important wetlands by reviewing previous Tribal wetland surveys and studies and prioritize for restoration/protection.
- Apply updated maps and other technology tools and Tribal cultural and natural resource protection priorities, and the Climate Change Adaptation Plan to develop methodology to identify and prioritize wetlands for restoration and protection.
- Utilize methodology to create a prioritized list of restorable wetlands and wetlands for protection.
- Research funding sources/partners for wetlands restoration and protection.

**Action:** The Blackfeet Tribe Wetlands Program will continue training for the wetland manager trainee and develop partnerships with other agencies.

**Activities:**

- The trainee will continue to perform training through regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and develop skills in 401 Certifications for any CWA 404 activities occurring on the Blackfeet Reservation.
- The Wetland Program trainee will attend additional field and technology courses arranged by partnerships with other agencies and non-profits; such as US EPA, Montana Heritage Program, Montana Wetlands Mapping Center, and the Montana Wetlands Council.
- The trainee will report on wetland protection and restoration projects that have been developed with project partners and present results at an US EPA or National Wetlands Training Conference.
- The trainee will apply improved skills and technology to effectively manage and protect Blackfeet wetland resources.

**Action:** Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and prepare for future projects coming down the line under all media programs.

**Activities:**

- The BEO will develop an end of year review that includes all the media programs and focuses on projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation in the coming year.
- Review all Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinance 117 (ALPO) (2019) permit applications for potential wetland impacts.
- Review proposed homesite leases and road construction projects to determine wetland acreage impacts.
- Evaluate and enforce wetland mitigation performance standards for impacted wetlands within the Reservation.
- Utilize Blackfeet Regulations to address wetland impacts and loss associated with infrastructure projects.

**Year Four (FY 2024) 10/1/23-9/30/24:**

**Action:** Secure funding and update additional USGS wetland topographic quad maps on the Blackfeet Reservation.

**Activities:**

- Develop partnerships with other agencies and secure funding for another eight quads.
- Partner with EMMA to update additional quad maps on the Reservation.
- Review updated maps and conduct field verification and wetland assessments in selected wetlands in each re-mapped quad.

- Finalize all map product updates with project partner.
- Transfer updated map data to Blackfoot Tribe (BEO, Fish and Wildlife, Lands Depts).
- Utilize updated maps to develop wetland protection and restoration proposals and projects with collaborative partners.

**Action:** Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to use with the University of Montana’s EMMA Program for updating Reservation wetland maps.

**Activities:**

- Research MOUs used by the Tribe and other entities to find an appropriate template.
- Draft MOU and have reviewed by Tribal attorney and U of M attorney.
- Revise as recommended by attorneys.
- Submit to Council and U of M for approval and signature.

**Action:** Summarize all past wetland monitoring and assessment data collected by the Blackfoot Environmental Office and enter into a database which facilitates data analysis.

**Activities:**

- Research wetland databases; National Wetlands Condition Assessment, ArcGIS, the database “Access”, other state and tribal databases used for storing wetlands data.
- Select a database or have Gold Systems develop a wetlands database for the Tribe.
- Update Wetlands QAPP if necessary.
- Enter all data from Year Three fieldwork into database at the Blackfoot Environmental Office once it is established.
- Enter all historic data into database.
- Do QA/QC to ensure data entry accuracy.

**Action:** Develop a draft wetland mitigation guidebook that addresses in-lieu fee mitigation, mitigation banks and permittee-responsible mitigation strategies on the Blackfoot Reservation.

**Activities:**

- Develop site selection criteria and the sequential legal and land assessment steps required for The Blackfoot Tribe’s Mitigation requirements.
- Identify what worked and what didn’t work with in-lieu fee mitigation on the Reservation and incorporate the lessons learned into the Mitigation Guidebook.
- Develop potential landowner partnerships for wetland mitigation projects.
- Develop incentives for landowners
- Create wetland protection and restoration plans that address Tribal and Federal regulatory requirements, Tribal Wetland Mitigation policy and the Tribe’s Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

- Use updated NWI maps for wetland mitigation planning and selection of potential mitigation sites.
- Develop draft version of mitigation guidebook for partner review.

**Action:** The Blackfeet Tribe Wetlands Program will continue training for the wetland Program Manager and develop partnerships with other agencies.

**Activities:**

- The Wetlands Program Manager and the Aquatic Lands Protection Manager will continue to upgrade their knowledge base and skills in the 401 Certification process. They will also continue the partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers for any CWA 401 activities occurring on the Reservation.
- The Wetlands Program Manager will attend additional field and technology courses arranged by partnerships with other agencies and non-profits; such as US EPA, Montana Heritage Program, Montana Wetlands Mapping Center, and the Montana Wetlands Council.
- The Manager will report on wetland protection and restoration projects that have been developed with project partners and present results at an US EPA or National Wetlands Training Conference.
- The Manager will apply improved skills and technology to effectively manage and protect Blackfeet wetland resources.

**Action:** Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and prepare for future projects coming down the line under all media programs.

**Activities:**

- The BEO will develop an end of year review that includes all the media programs and focuses on projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation in the coming year.
- Review all Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinance 117 (ALPO) (2019) permit applications for potential wetland impacts.
- Review proposed homesite leases and road construction projects to determine wetland acreage impacts.
- Evaluate and enforce wetland mitigation performance standards for impacted wetlands within the watershed.
- Utilize Blackfeet Regulations and Mitigation Guidebook to address wetland impacts and loss associated with infrastructure projects.

**Year Five (FY 2025) 10/1/24-9/30/25:**

**Action:** Secure funding and update additional USGS wetland topographic quad maps on the Blackfeet Reservation.

**Activities:**

- Develop partnerships with other agencies and secure funding for additional updated mapping.
- Partner with EMMA to update additional quad maps on the Reservation.
- Review updated maps and conduct field ground-truthing and wetland assessments in selected wetlands in each re-mapped quad.
- Finalize all map product updates with project partners.
- Transfer updated map data to Blackfeet Tribe (BEO, Fish and Wildlife, Lands Depts).
- Utilize updated maps to develop wetland protection and restoration proposals and projects with collaborative partners.

**Action:** The Blackfeet Tribe Wetlands Program will continue training for the Wetlands Program Manager and develop partnerships with other agencies.

**Activities:**

- The trainee will continue to perform training through regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and develop skills in 401 Certifications for any CWA 404 activities occurring on the Blackfeet Reservation.
- The Wetland Program trainee will attend additional field and technology courses arranged by partnerships with other agencies and non-profits; such as US EPA, Montana Heritage Program, Montana Wetlands Mapping Center, and the Montana Wetlands Council.
- The trainee will report on wetland protection and restoration projects that have been developed with project partners and present results at an US EPA or National Wetlands Training Conference.
- The trainee will apply improved skills and technology to effectively manage and protect Blackfeet wetland resources.

**Action:** Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and prepare for future projects coming down the line under all media programs.

**Activities:**

- The BEO will develop an end of year review that includes all the media programs and focuses on projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation in the coming year.
- Review all Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinance 117 (ALPO) (2019) permit applications for potential wetland impacts.

- Review proposed homesite leases and road construction projects to determine wetland acreage impacts.
- Evaluate and enforce wetland mitigation performance standards for impacted wetlands within the watershed.
- Utilize Blackfeet Regulations and Mitigation Guidebook to address wetland impacts and loss associated with infrastructure projects.

**Action:** Consider watershed planning, wildlife habitat, and other objectives when developing the Tribe's selection process for restoration/protection sites.

**Activities:**

- Identify rare, vulnerable, or important wetlands by reviewing previous Tribal wetland surveys and studies and prioritize for restoration/protection.
- Apply tools (GIS, color-infrared photography, mapping, LIDAR, modeling, field inspection of soil, vegetation, and hydrologic condition) to develop methodology to identify and prioritize restorable wetlands and wetlands for protection.
- Utilize methodology to create a prioritized list of restorable wetlands and wetlands for protection.
- Research funding sources/partners for wetlands restoration and protection.
- Prepare a descriptive list of Tribal wetlands sorted by watershed and prioritized for restoration and/or protection.

**Year Six (FY 2026) 10/1/25-9/30/26:**

**Action:** Secure funding and update additional USGS wetland topographic quad maps on the Blackfeet Reservation.

**Activities:**

- Develop partnerships with other agencies and secure funding for additional updated mapping.
- Partner with EMMA to update additional quad maps on the Reservation.
- Review updated maps and conduct field ground-truthing and wetland assessments in selected wetlands in each re-mapped quad.
- Finalize all map product updates with project partners.
- Transfer updated map data to Blackfeet Tribe (BEO, Fish and Wildlife, Lands Depts).
- Transfer map data to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for incorporation within the publicly available Wetlands Mapper (National Wetlands Inventory).
- Transfer map data to Montana Natural Heritage Program and the Montana State Library's Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) on an as-needed basis upon written request.
- Produce final wetland protection, restoration and mitigation site report and map.
- Utilize updated maps to develop wetland protection and restoration proposals and projects with collaborative partners.

**Action:** Update Wetland Program Plan for next six-year period and submit to EPA for approval.

**Activities:**

- Revise WPP per EPA comments and have it approved by EPA.
- Summarize work completed in this Wetland Program Plan and report to EPA.
- Complete any mid-year or final reports due to EPA and submit.
- Prepare short-term plan for next two-year period.

**Action:** The Blackfeet Tribe Wetlands Program will continue training for the wetland manager trainee and develop partnerships with other agencies.

**Activities:**

- The trainee will continue to perform training through regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and develop skills in 401 Certifications for any CWA 404 activities occurring on the Blackfeet Reservation.
- The Wetland Program trainee will attend additional field and technology courses arranged by partnerships with other agencies and non-profits; such as US EPA, Montana Heritage Program, Montana Wetlands Mapping Center, and the Montana Wetlands Council.
- The trainee will report on wetland protection and restoration projects that have been developed with project partners and present results at an US EPA or National Wetlands Training Conference.
- The trainee will apply improved skills and technology to effectively manage and protect Blackfeet wetland resources.

**Action:** Perform a regulatory review of projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation and prepare for future projects coming down the line under all media programs.

**Activities:**

- The BEO will develop an end of year review that includes all the media programs and focuses on projects that may affect wetlands on the Reservation in the coming year.
- Review all Aquatic Lands Protection Ordinance 117 (ALPO) (2019) permit applications for potential wetland impacts.
- Review proposed homesite leases and road construction projects to determine if they will impact wetlands.
- Evaluate and enforce wetland mitigation performance standards for impacted wetlands within the Reservation.
- Utilize Blackfeet regulations and Wetland Mitigation Guidebook to address wetland impacts and loss associated with infrastructure projects.
- Update Wetland Mitigation Policy and Performance Standards based on project results.



**Action:** Draft the final version of the wetland mitigation guidebook for the Blackfeet Reservation.

**Activities:**

- The Wetlands Program Manager will select an editorial group for final draft review.
- Incorporate comments and revisions into Final Wetland Mitigation Guidebook.
- Secure funding for printing costs and share final product with other Tribal Wetland programs.
- Present results at a national and Tribal Wetlands conference.

**Action:** Develop and improve methodology for classifying, assessing and monitoring wetlands of the Blackfeet Reservation that exhibit a temporary hydroperiod.

**Activities:**

- Inventory and classify these wetlands on the Reservation.
- Research assessment methodologies for temporary hydroperiod wetlands and select appropriate methodology(ies) for temporary wetlands found on the Reservation.
- If appropriate methodology cannot be found, develop custom methodology.
- Seek grant funding to do assessment and monitoring of temporary wetlands.