



## WISCONSIN EPHEMERAL PONDS PROJECT



### I. HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR WEPP DATA FORM (*Use a separate field data sheet for each visit.*)

#### A. Observer information

Record your data using a number 2 lead pencil, it doesn't run when wet and is easy to read when photocopied. Write the names of the people conducting the survey and the name of your local Partner organization. Be sure to include the date and time of your survey! **Fill out the form based on present observations.** You do not have to guess about past or future conditions. We will use the total information from all your visits to make a status determination.

#### B. Location

Record the Potential Ephemeral Pond (PEP) ID noted on the map supplied by DNR. On your first site visit, complete all location information (i.e., County, and T, R, S,  $\frac{1}{4}$  S &  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{4}$  S). The Township, Range and Section will be printed on your map. On subsequent visits only enter the PEP ID. GPS coordinates are **not** required for mapped PEPs. For newly observed ponds that are not mapped as PEPs, record GPS coordinates and/or include a map with the location. Latitude and longitude in decimal degrees to 7 places after the decimal point is preferred. If your GPS reads out in another form, such as Degrees-minutes-seconds or degrees-decimal minutes, make sure that is noted.

#### C. Property Information

Write down the name of the landowner for your site. You **MUST** obtain permission to enter any property **PRIOR** to conducting a survey. Permission is also required to cross private lands to gain access to a public site. On public lands contact the land manager.

#### D. Historic Hydroperiod Data

Fill in information about this site's past hydrologic status. This is not likely to be used by citizens. however if you are very familiar with the pond, do you know when it typically goes dry? Are other data available describing when the pond has gone dry in previous years? Include the source for your information and the time period for the historic data.

#### E. Basin Physical and Hydrologic Data

1. Pond Basin Occurrence: Is there evidence that a basin exists at this site? Typically the basin is most full early in spring. The edge of the ponded water is likely to be the same as, or very close to, the basin edge. **If no**, then describe the feature and take a photo to submit with your data sheet. *You are now finished at this site. Read section III. below "What to do with your WEPP Data" and proceed as described.*

2. Basin Connection: Walk the entire perimeter of the pond basin to determine where the basin edge is in relation to other surface water features, such as stream inlets or outlets or a larger waterbody such as an open marsh. If you circle "yes", also circle the type of waterbody the pond basin is connected to.

3. Basin Dimensions: You need only do this once. It can be early when the basin is full of ponded water by pacing parallel to the water's edge or it can be done after the pond has gone dry or is mostly dry. This is expected to be an estimate, not an exact measurement. Use your pacing skills to approximate length and width of the basin. Indicate the units used (m or ft). If the pond is an irregular shape, you may sketch it on the back of the form and show the approximate dimensions.

4. Water in the Basin: If you circle "yes", measure water depth in the deepest area (indicate units). Do not 'push' the ruler down into the substrate; instead hold it so that it rests gently on the surface of the substrate.

Surface Water % Cover: If there is hardly any water left, check <10%. If there is some water but lots of the basin exposed, check 10 to 50%. If mostly water, check >50%.

Water Temperature: Collect water temperature at deepest point. Avoid disturbing the water and ground. Allow thermometer to stabilize for a minimum of 1 minute. Indicate units (C or F).

Substrate Moisture: Select "saturated" if water pools around your boot when pressing down, "moist" if the substrate is wet but does not pool around boot, and "dry" if the material feels dry to the touch.

5. Evidence of deeper water earlier: If yes, estimate maximum water depth and evidence used (e.g., water marks on trees, bare soil at basin edge, debris hanging on vegetation on basin edges, other). See diagram on back page for measuring maximum water depth.

When the current water level is below the base of any indicator tree, or there are no trees, then get your best estimate with an “indirect measure”. Like with Water Depth, approximate is fine. For Maximum Water Depth, +/- 6 inches is still helpful.

6. **Ground Cover:** You need only do this once. The ground cover is the layer of plant material in the pond basin – important information about the possible food & habitat value of the pond. Record this information when the pond is mostly dry.

7. **Soil type:** You need only do this once. Check the dominant soil type present in the basin. Most EP soils are mineral (silty/clay or sandy). Silty/clay forms a ribbon when rolled between your fingers; the ribbon will fall apart if sandy. If silt/clay particles are present, the soil will feel STICKY when it's wet, so you can make the ribbon, etc. Muck/Peat is very dark and has no grit when rubbed between your fingers. Muck/peat washes off your boots and hands easily. It is easiest to record this information when the pond is mostly dry.

8. **Trees in Basin:** You need only do this once. Circle “yes” if live standing trees are present within the pond basin. Trees (as opposed to saplings or seedlings) have a diameter of at least 4 inches about 4 feet from the ground.

9. **Tree Canopy:** You need only do this once. Collect information in late spring when leaves are full size. Stand in the middle of the pond and look up. If almost all sky, check <10%, if mostly shaded, check >50%, if part sky/part shade, check 10 to 50%.

10. **Ephemeral Pond:** Use the information collected during the survey to complete this section. Your comments are VERY VALUABLE, especially to explain your reasoning in “close calls”. Just give us your best educated answer, and use “not sure” if you can't tell.

## F. Basin Disturbance

For each disturbance type, circle disturbances observed. Add any additional disturbances observed that may be detrimental to the health of the ephemeral pond.

## G. Indicator Observed

For the calling frogs and toad, check “visual” if you see the species at the site. If you make your observation by hearing its call, check “call”. If you see and hear the frog or toad, place a check in both categories. For each of the other animals listed, check if you see it.

## II. TOP THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN TAKING PHOTOS AT YOUR EPHEMERAL PONDS

- Digital camera photos are preferred, but cell phone photos are OK if that's all that is available.
- It's good to take photos from the same location each time. You can mark the site with a stake wire flag or marking tape. (Asking permission will ensure it won't be removed).
- **Save each digital photo with the following naming format: Township-Range-Section-PEP ID-photo number-date (in two digit day-month-year format)-photo number. The Township, Range and Section will be printed on the maps supplied.**
- Note on back of data sheet if you have taken photos and record the names of those photos.
- If you aren't sure about something, take a photo and share that with your Partner or the coordinating team.
- It is best to submit both digital and paper copies of photos along with your data sheets to your Partner. You can email your partner your photos, send them a CD or share a USB drive with them to make the transfer. Your Partner will then submit the photos to the WDNR to be archived within the database.

## III. WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR WEPP DATA

1. While you are still at your PEP site, double check you have completely filled out your data form.
  - a. Did you include the date and time you monitored?
  - b. Did you include (on the back) names for any photos you took while at your site?
2. Make a copy of your data form.
3. Send the original to your Partner.

### Measuring Maximum Water Depth

- Measure “Water Depth” (**blue line**) at deepest point
- Find high water mark on tree standing in water (**green line**)
- Measure vertical distance from the water surface to high-water mark indicator (**brown line**).
- Add together for Maximum Water Depth.

