



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Alaska District**

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# Public Notice

Date: 22 March 2006

Identification Number: SPN-2006-445

In reply refer to above identification number

EXPIRATION DATE: 22 April 2007

SPECIAL PUBLIC NOTICE 06-445

PUBLICATION AND TRIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF  
ALASKA INTERIM REGIONAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE 1987 WETLAND DELINEATION MANUAL

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District, announces the publication and trial implementation period of the Alaska Interim Regional Supplement (Supplement) to the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual (1987 Manual). (The 1987 Manual may be found at <http://el.erdc.usace.army.mil/elpubs/pdf/wlman87.pdf>.) This Supplement was developed by wetland delineation experts from state and Federal agencies and academia with experience within Alaska. It has been peer reviewed by an independent panel of Alaska scientists and practitioners and made available for a 60-day public comment period on June 28, 2005. This interim document will be tested for one year prior to finalization; the one year period shall be effective 30 days from the date of this public notice. The Supplement will be field tested by interagency teams of state and Federal scientists to assess its clarity and ease of use, and to determine whether its use will result in any spatial changes in wetland delineation for Clean Water Act purposes. Comments on this supplement should be submitted to Katherine Trott (CECW-LRD), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 441 G Street, NW, Washington DC 20314-1000 or by email to [1987Manual@usace.army.mil](mailto:1987Manual@usace.army.mil).

The Supplement, including data forms, and field evaluation questionnaire, as well as the independent peer review report and response document, the Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impacts prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act, and copies of public comments are available on the Regulatory Homepage Website at [http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/cecwo/reg/reg\\_supp.htm](http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/cecwo/reg/reg_supp.htm).

Attached to this public notice is a table of median beginning and ending growing season dates for 19 ecoregions. These dates are calculated from remote sensing data presented in US Department of the Interior US Geological Survey Open-File Report 01-11, Markon (2001), available at [http://agdcftpl.wr.usgs.gov/pub/projects/lcc/ak\\_avhrr/pheno\\_ofr\\_final.pdf](http://agdcftpl.wr.usgs.gov/pub/projects/lcc/ak_avhrr/pheno_ofr_final.pdf). Use of these dates in evaluation of certain wetland hydrology indicators is recommended in Chapter 4 of the Supplement as an alternative to the use of the Wetlands Determination (WETS) tables reported by Natural Resource Conservation Service National Water and Climate Center (<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/climate/wetlands.html>), which is the nationally recommended procedure for estimating growing season dates. The WETS tables are only available for certain National Weather Service meteorological stations, and many areas of Alaska are therefore not covered. Comments on the attachment should also be submitted to Katherine Trott (CECW-LRD), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 441 G Street, NW, Washington DC 20314-1000 or by email to [1987Manual@usace.army.mil](mailto:1987Manual@usace.army.mil).

The following guidance is superseded by this Supplement, and is hereby rescinded by this public notice:

"Wetlands Delineation Growing Season"; Alaska District Special Public Notice 2003-05, dated 25 July 2003.

"Implementation of the 1987 Corps Wetland Delineation Manual," memorandum from John P. Elmore dated 27 August 1991.

"Questions & Answers on the 1987 Manual," memorandum from John F. Studt dated 7 October 1991.

"Clarification and Interpretation of the 1987 Manual," memorandum from Major General Arthur E. Williams dated 6 March 1992.

"Revisions to National Plant Lists," memorandum from Michael L. Davis dated 17 January 1996.

"NRCS Field Indicators of Hydric Soils," memorandum from John F. Studt dated 21 March 1997.

We are planning to hold orientation sessions near the start of the growing season to help interested parties become more familiar with the Supplement. Persons interested in attending these sessions should contact the Alaska District office within 30 days of this notice via e-mail at [regpagemaster@poa02.usace.army.mil](mailto:regpagemaster@poa02.usace.army.mil) or by calling Mr. Mike Holley toll free (within Alaska) at 1-800-478-2712 or 907-753-2712. Specific dates and locations will be determined based on this input, and interested parties will be notified.

Effective 30 days from the date of this public notice, the Supplement data forms and indicators shall be used for any data collection for wetland delineations. Field data collected for wetland delineations using the 1987 Manual prior to the effective date of this notice, but not yet submitted to the Alaska District for review and formal approval will be grandfathered. Documentation must be submitted to the Alaska District which clearly shows the field data was collected prior to 30 days from the date of this notice in order to qualify for this grandfather provision. Once this documentation and the field data have been reviewed and approved by the Alaska District, a written jurisdictional determination will be issued.

While we are confident the Supplement will improve the accuracy of wetland delineation in Alaska, anyone performing a wetland delineation during this interim period using the Supplement who believes it has resulted in a significantly different boundary line than the 1987 Manual may also complete the delineation using the 1987 Manual and submit both delineations. Enough points to adequately describe the representative plant communities, soils, and hydrology of the site(s) and to clearly document the difference in boundaries between the two methods must be included. Data recorded on both the existing 1992 data forms and the new Supplement data forms, maps indicating the location of the field site and data collection points (upland and wetland), and a completed field evaluation questionnaire for each delineation must be submitted as part of the jurisdictional determination request to the Alaska District Office. The District will make the final determination based on analysis of all the submitted information. This information will also be used in evaluation and potential modification of the Supplement.

District Engineer  
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

Markon, Carl J. 2001. Seven-Year Phenological Record of Alaskan Ecoregions Derived from Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer Normalized Difference Vegetation Index Data, U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 01-11, 57 p.

Attachment

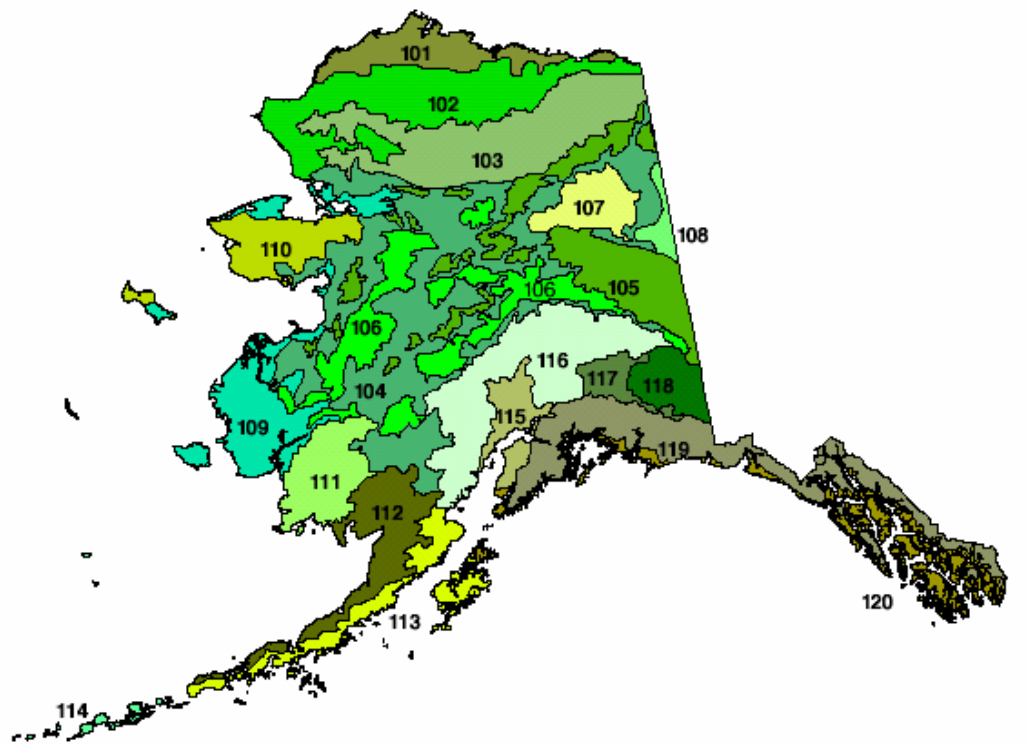
**Attachment 1: Median Beginning and Ending Growing Season Dates for Ecoregions of Alaska, derived from Markon (2001).**

Ecoregion <sup>1</sup>	Beginning of Growing Season (Minday) <sup>2</sup>	End of Growing Season (Lastday) <sup>2</sup>
101 Arctic Coastal Plain	June 20	September 18
102 Arctic Foothills	June 7	September 21
103 Brooks Range	May 30	September 24
104 Interior Forested Lowlands and Uplands	May 3	October 3
105 Interior Highlands	May 4	October 2
106 Interior Bottomlands	May 2	October 3
107 Yukon Flats	April 20	October 3
108 Ogilvie Mountains	April 19	October 3
109 Subarctic Coastal Plains	May 23	October 3
110 Seward Peninsula	June 2	October 1
111 Ahklun and Kilbuck Mountains	May 16	October 2
112 Bristol Bay-Nushagak Lowlands	April 25	October 4
113 Alaska Peninsula Mountains	May 15	October 1
114 <sup>2</sup>	N/A	N/A
115 Cook Inlet	May 8	October 5
116 Alaska Range	May 24	October 3
117 Copper Plateau	May 2	October 3
118 Wrangell Mountains	May 11	September 28
119 Pacific Coastal Mountains	May 29	September 26
120 Coastal Western Hemlock-Sitka Spruce Forests	April 29	September 28

<sup>1</sup>Ecoregions are shown in Figure 1. (page 2 of the attachment), also taken from Markon (2001).

<sup>2</sup>These dates were calculated from the Minday and Lastday dates presented in Markon (2001) for the years 1991-1997. Minday is defined as the onset of greenness and Lastday is the end of greenness as measured by Very High Resolution Radiometer (VHRR) derived normalized difference vegetation index (NVDI). All dates were determined by taking the median Julian date of the seven years of data and converting to calendar dates. Leap years were included. When calculating median dates, duplicate values were ranked equally. For example, the median of the Julian dates 125, 129, 139, 143, 143, 147, and 152 would be 143. If there was a choice between a leap year and normal year for the median date, the normal year was used. Reading of the entire paper is strongly recommended. It is available at [http://agdcftpl.wr.usgs.gov/pub/projects/lcc/ak\\_avhrr/pheno\\_ofr\\_final.pdf](http://agdcftpl.wr.usgs.gov/pub/projects/lcc/ak_avhrr/pheno_ofr_final.pdf).

<sup>3</sup>There was no data available for Ecoregion 114 Aleutian Islands. Alternate procedures for estimation of growing season beginning and ending dates should be used in this ecoregion.



**Ecoregions of Alaska**

101	Arctic Coastal Plain	111	Ahklun and Kilbuck Mountains
102	Arctic Foothills	112	Bristol Bay-Nushagak Lowlands
103	Brooks Range	113	Alaska Peninsula Mountains
104	Interior Forested Lowlands and Uplands	114	Aleutian Islands
105	Interior Highlands	115	Cook Inlet
106	Interior Bottomlands	116	Alaska Range
107	Yukon Flats	117	Copper Plateau
108	Ogilvie Mountains	118	Wrangell Mountains
109	Subarctic Coastal Plains	119	Pacific Coastal Mountains
110	Seward Peninsula	120	Coastal Western Hemlock-Sitka Spruce Forests

Figure 1. Ecoregions of Alaska (Gallant and others, 1995).

Markon, Carl J. 2001. Seven-Year Phenological Record of Alaskan Ecoregions Derived from Advanced Very High Resolution Radiometer Normalized Difference Vegetation Index Data, U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 01-11, 57 p.