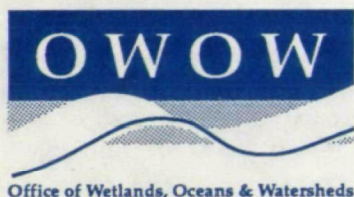




OFFICE OF WETLANDS, OCEANS AND WATERSHEDS

Responsibilities and Functions



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds (OWOW) is one of four offices within EPA's Office of Water. It was created in April 1991 to bring together Agency programs that manage and protect the aquatic ecosystems of inland and coastal watersheds. OWOW combines EPA Headquarters' responsibilities for addressing nonpoint source pollution; restoring and protecting wetland, river, lake, coastal, and marine environments; and leading surface water monitoring and water quality assessment activities. OWOW assists EPA Regional offices in implementing these programs by developing policies and regulations, providing technical support, and serving as an advocate for the programs with Congress and the public at large. OWOW is organized into three divisions and a Director's Office.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

★ 1992 ★
THE YEAR OF
CLEAN WATER



*Celebration +
Commitment*

Policy and Communications Staff

Manages special OWOW projects and initiatives, supports office-wide outreach, coordinates policy and legislative activities that cut across the OWOW divisions, and serves as the general point of contact for Congressional staff, state and local governments, and other external groups. A priority project of the Policy and Communications Staff is promotion of watershed protection through cross-media, holistic aquatic resource protection and management.

Budget and Program Management Staff

Provides coordination and program management services for OWOW including budget, planning, contract management, human resources management, and administrative support.



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ASSESSMENT AND WATERSHED PROTECTION DIVISION

Monitoring Branch

Leads and supports water quality monitoring and assessment programs, and designs and manages related automated information systems. Among the Monitoring Branch's specific responsibilities are: writing biennial reports to Congress on national water quality; developing guidance on biological methods and integrated watershed protection and assessment approaches; supporting and coordinating OWOW's volunteer water monitoring program; developing water quality indicators; coordinating Office of Water (OW) surface water monitoring programs with related programs elsewhere in EPA and in other Federal agencies; and managing and modernizing water quality and geographic information systems to increase the availability and usability of water quality information nationwide.

Nonpoint Source Control Branch

Supports and implements state and Federal nonpoint source control programs. Among this Branch's highest priorities are developing and executing state nonpoint source control programs required by Section 319 of the Clean Water Act and by Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Management Reauthorization Act of 1990. The Branch develops technical guidance for best management measures for major categories and classes of nonpoint sources, and cooperates with major Federal agencies (including the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) in establishing effective nonpoint source control programs.

Watershed Branch

Develops national watershed-based policies and programs. These include activities related to targeting water bodies for priority cleanup; maintaining lists of impaired water bodies identified by the states; and developing watershed-based total maximum daily loads. Among the Watershed Branch's specific responsibilities are: managing the Clean Lakes program; coordinating an EPA-wide workgroup on habitat protection; conducting outreach programs, primarily through the Nonpoint Source News Notes and supporting technology transfer and research needs.

OCEANS AND COASTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

Coastal Management Branch

Develops and implements the National Estuary Program (NEP) and the Near Coastal Waters (NCW) Program. Among the Coastal Management Branch's specific responsibilities are: developing national policies and guidance for the NEP and NCW Program; providing management and institutional assistance to NEP and NCW participants, including assistance in developing state and local finance methods and integrating the NEP into local and state programs; working with other branches in developing coastal success stories; and working with other EPA and Federal programs to enhance their participation in coastal and estuarine protection efforts.

Coastal Technology Branch

Responsible for the scientific and technical aspects of marine and coastal pollution problems and solutions. Among the Coastal Technology Branch's specific responsibilities are: managing the operations and scientific work of the Ocean Survey Vessel *Peter W. Anderson*; developing strategies and technical guidance for coastal and marine monitoring programs; maintaining the Ocean Data Evaluation System (ODES) database; developing indicators of estuarine ecosystem health; supporting the development of marine water and sediment criteria; supporting coastal and marine volunteer monitoring activities; communicating new and emerging technologies through various outreach and information transfer activities; and coordinating and implementing guidance for the multiagency Coastal America program.

Marine Pollution Control Branch

Carries out program and regulatory responsibilities related to marine protection under various regulatory authorities for issues such as ocean dumping, marine debris, and Clean Water Act Section 301(h) waivers. Among the Marine Pollution Control Branch's specific responsibilities are: developing regulations, program and technical guidance; preparing reports to Congress; designing and conducting surveys and assessments to evaluate marine pollution; serving as Division lead for enforcement-related activities; coordinating marine regulatory programs within EPA and with other Federal agencies, and representing EPA on legal and technical committees of the London Dumping Convention and MEPC.

Wetlands and Aquatic Resources Regulatory Branch

Develops regulations, policies and guidance under Section 404 and other related sections of the Clean Water Act. Specific responsibilities of the Branch include: developing environmental criteria, rules and guidance for the regulation of discharges of dredged and fill material into the waters of the U.S., including wetlands; providing policy and technical support to the EPA Regions on the review of activities regulated under the River and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act; and working with other EPA Headquarters and Regional Offices, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, other Federal agencies, and external groups in executing these responsibilities.

Wetlands Strategies and State Programs Branch

Develops and implements programs and activities to assist state, Tribal, and local governments in protecting wetlands. Administers EPA Headquarter responsibilities for developing state capabilities to administer wetland programs, including state wetland conservation planning and formal assumption of the Section 404 program by qualified states. Manages public education, information and outreach activities related to wetlands, including the Wetlands Hotline (1-800-832-7828). Coordinates joint activities with EPA programs and other Federal agencies concerning wetlands protection. Develops or improves approaches for wetlands protection including integrated natural resource planning, and participates in ecosystem initiatives to address problems of wetland loss and degradation. Improves the scientific information base for wetland decision-making, which includes working with EPA's Office of Research and Development on wetland research issues.

WETLANDS DIVISION

OFFICE OF WETLANDS, OCEANS, AND WATERSHEDS

June 1992

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