

BMP No. 10

Timber Harvesting in Wetland Areas

Wetlands are areas characterized by soils saturated with moisture during all or a large portion of the year and support a number of plants that grow in wet soils. **The requirements in this BMP are supplemental to other BMPs and contain information and specifications for trafficking and timber harvesting around streams, sloughs, and other waters in a wetland.**

Determining Wetland Areas

Official determination of whether a forested area is a wetland is the responsibility of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, unless there is adjacent cropland, in which case the determination may be made by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Contact the Kentucky Division of Forestry, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or Cooperative Extension Service (see Appendix F) for assistance in determining wetlands.

Constructing Roads, Trails, Landings

Road construction is the activity most likely to cause changes in the drainage of wetlands. When needed, locate roads on the higher ground or “ridges” and parallel to the drainage system, and use a minimum amount of fill material. Locate log decks on elevated areas away from streams as far as is practical. Keep log landings small and few in number.

Minimum Requirement:

Minimize construction of permanent roads, locate landings on higher ground, and restrict vehicle traffic to a minimum.

Crossing Streams and Sloughs

Minimum Requirement:

Avoid crossing of streams and sloughs, if possible.

When unavoidable, cross at right angles. Use culverts and bridges without altering natural drainage and without disturbing stream banks and other sensitive areas.

Retire temporary roads, trails, and landings (see BMP No. 1 and No. 2).

Streamside Management Zones (SMZs) in Wetland Areas

Minimum Requirement:

Leave a minimum of 50 percent of the overstory trees to shade perennial streams and sloughs.

- **Retain an overstory tree width** of at least 50 feet.
- **A least 50 percent** of the overstory trees should be retained with the tree width (see details in BMP No. 3).
- **Operation of logging vehicles** and equipment should be minimized in SMZs.

General Felling and Skidding

- **Remove tops of harvested trees** from streams and sloughs to allow unrestricted water flow.
- **Plan harvesting during dry weather.** Wetlands are particularly sensitive to rutting.
- **Use low ground pressure tires on skidders,** when available, and concentrate skidding as much as possible on a few primary skid trails to minimize site disturbance and compaction.
- **Roughen severely compacted areas** on landings and skid trails.

Regulatory Requirements for BMP No. 10

(See Appendix A for Explanations)

- Filling or draining of wetland: (**33 USC 1251 et seq., Section 404**)
- All silvicultural operations: (**410 KAR 5:026, 5:029, 5:030, and 5:031**)
- Activities near high-quality waters and outstanding national resource waters: (**401 KAR 5:029, 5:030, and 5:031**)
- Activities near wild rivers: (**KRS 146.200 et seq. and 401 KAR 4:100-140**)