

Wetland Delineations

The simple definition of a **Wetland** is "land that is seasonally or permanently inundated with water." Wetlands, however, get more complicated and far more fascinating than that. They are an essential ecosystem that provides dozens of invaluable services to animals, plants, water, and people. The rich diversity of organisms in wetlands can break down pollutants and clean the water. Hundreds of plants and animals are specially adapted to wetlands and can survive only in these habitats.



Having wetlands on your property can even increase the value of your land. Because of these reasons, there are many laws and regulations that protect water and wetlands and can be difficult to navigate. Protecting you, your land's value, and these crucial habitats is paramount for Rock Leaf. We will work with you and the governmental agencies to benefit everyone involved.

What: A wetland delineation is essential for determining the edge of a wetland or where the wet, lowland area transitions into the drier, upland area. Soil, plants, and hydrology are the key indicators of the transition. This edge is called the "delineation," and determines the locations and surface area of wetlands within the project area. This information is required by the Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), MN Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR), Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR), Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), and other Local Government Units (LGUs).

When: When do these agencies require a Wetland Delineation? Typically, whenever a wetland could be impacted by projects involving land alterations. This could include dredging, filling, or draining a wetland while constructing buildings, roads, agricultural fields, etc.

When: When should the field portion of wetlands be done? It is crucial that wetland delineations are performed during the growing season. As anyone who lives in cold, snow-covered areas can attest, all three indicators (soil, hydrology, and especially plants) can be hard to discern and sometimes wholly absent when buried beneath the snow. For the southern portion of Minnesota, the growing season typically starts in early May and finishes around October.

Why: Why perform a wetland delineation? The laws and regulations around wetlands can be overwhelming. Wetland Delineations allow the landowner and agencies to determine the best course of action to avoid and minimize impacts on wetlands. Wetland Delineations can also provide crucial advice for landowners that can help protect them when making decisions.

Our Experience and Expertise: Site Assessment and Wetland Delineations

We provide two levels of consideration of wetlands. Our first is the **Site Assessment**. This involves a walk-through of the land to create a map showing potential wetlands in your project area. We at Rock Leaf recommend doing a Site Assessment for large areas or areas where wetland delineations may not be needed. Site Assessments are faster, cheaper, and can provide information on places to focus on, which saves the landowner time and money.



We at Rock Leaf also have experience providing **Wetland Delineations** in various areas, habitats, and situations. Recognized by BWSR as Certified Wetland Delineators and Delineators-in-Training, Kat Dickerson and Nate Gillett have the experience and knowledge to identify hydrophytic plants, hydric indicators in soil, and the presence of water near the surface. They have worked with undisturbed areas, mosaics, ditches, and agricultural fields. Rock Leaf also has the experience to help Landowners and Project Managers navigate the permits, regulations, and laws required by the state and the Federal Government.

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