

Management Questions and Monitoring Questions

The information needs of the major wetland monitoring efforts in the region have been compiled for the WRMP (see Appendix A) and summarized. These needs have been translated into *management* questions (i.e., what the managers want to know) and the related *monitoring* questions (i.e., what scientists think should be monitored to answer the management questions). The priority questions for the WRMP during FY 2002-03 have been selected based on the following criteria.

Criteria to Select *Management* Questions for WRMP 2001

- ? *Has the question already been answered, or is it being answered?* If the answer is “yes,” then the question is rejected. In these cases, the WRMP should work to communicate the existing answer and to improve communication among the wetland managers and scientists.
- ? *Can the question be answered in 1-2 years?* If the answer is “no,” or “probably not,” then the question is rejected at this time. The WRMP should initially focus on important management questions that can be answered quickly. Many questions that have been asked by managers cannot be answered without many years of monitoring or intensive research.
- ? *Is the question common to multiple programs?* If the answer is “yes,” and the question has passed the other criteria, then it is given a high priority. Only a few questions have been asked by more than one program.
- ? *Can available personnel answer the question?* If the answer is “no,” then the question is rejected at this time. The WRMP should endeavor to add funds and partnerships that will increase its technical capabilities.

Criteria to Select *Monitoring* Questions for the WRMP 2001

- ? *Does the question relate directly to the management question?* If the answer is “no,” then the question is rejected. Some management questions have been translated into many monitoring questions, some of which are more direct translations.
- ? *Can the question be answered by available personnel?* If the answer is “no,” then the question is rejected at this time. If the Program grows it will add funds and partnerships that will increase its technical capabilities.

The four questions of highest priority for wetland tracking have been synthesized from the information gleaned from the major wetland monitoring efforts in the region. The priority questions are: (1) what are the distribution and abundance of wetlands; (2) what are the tidal elevations of estuarine wetlands; (3) what are typical sedimentation rates; and (4) what is the status of wetland plants and wildlife, especially protected species and invasive non-native species