



January 1, 2020

## Continuing Education for MWPCP – Policies and Procedures

This document explains specific Minnesota Wetland Professional Certification Program (MWPCP) policies and procedures related to Continuing Education.

### Terminology:

**Certified Professionals** – Individuals that are recognized by the MWPCP as having a certain level of knowledge, expertise and experience in MWPCP subject matter areas related to conducting and/or reviewing professional work associated with wetland regulatory compliance in Minnesota.

**Certified In-Training Professionals** - Individuals that are recognized by the MWPCP as having a certain level of knowledge and training in MWPCP subject matter areas related to conducting and/or reviewing professional work associated with wetland regulatory compliance in Minnesota.

**Certification Renewal** – The process of renewing certification of MWPCP Certified Professionals and In-Training Professionals every three years through attendance of professional wetland training events.

**Credit Hours** – Number of hours (to the nearest hour) associated with an MWPCP-qualifying continuing education training event minus scheduled breaks.

**Approved Training Event** – Professional wetland training event where the MWPCP has determined the number of credit hours participants will receive for certification renewal if they attend/participate.



## Qualifying Professional Wetland Training Events:

Per the MWPCP Plan, qualifying training events must be primarily focused on one or more the following subject areas:

- Wetland delineation/identification;
- Wetland restoration;
- State/federal wetland regulations;
- Wetland functional assessment; and/or
- Wetland monitoring.

Qualifying training includes the following professional-level events:

- Classroom and/or field-based classes;
- Training webinars;
- Online training (videos, narrated presentations, etc.);
- Structured field trips; and
- Professional conferences/seminars.

The following types of events/activities do *not* qualify:

- College courses used to meet degree requirements for enrolled students;
- Activities which are part of the participant's job/position such as meetings (e.g. TEP meetings), field work, etc.;
- Accompanying and/or assisting other professionals during work activities (mentoring);
- Activities that are not for the primary purpose of educating or training working professionals;
- Events that lack a stated training purpose/goal and detailed agenda; and
- Events where participation cannot be documented.



Individuals intending to claim credit hours associated with qualifying training events for certification renewal must be a registered participant or instructor. Instructors can only claim the number of hours they were involved in instructing. They cannot claim hours associated with training preparation.

## **Credit Hour Determinations:**

Credit hours for certification renewal are equivalent to the number of hours (to the nearest hour) associated with a course or event minus scheduled breaks. Only hours specific to qualifying subject matter areas attended by the certified participant qualify. This will require participants in conferences and similar events that involve both eligible and non-eligible subject matter areas to specify which eligible presentations were attended, and to quantify those hours as opposed to reporting the total hours of the conference.

## **Approved Training Events:**

The MWPCP encourages training event sponsors to proactively seek a credit hour determination for their event if they believe that attendees will include certified individuals. The MWPCP will provide a form for approval of qualifying credit hours. Training event participants can also seek a credit hour determination if they can provide information on the event such as a detailed agenda and instructor credentials. Approved training events will be listed publicly on the MWPCP website.

## **Continuing Education Reporting for Certification Renewal:**

Certified professional and in-training individuals must attend at least 18 credit hours of qualifying training events every three years to maintain their certification. No more than four of the 18 required credit hours in a three-year period can be obtained from online training where the participant does not attend in person.

The deadline for reporting continuing education credit hours is January 1 of the year following the certification renewal year. The certification renewal year is three years from the calendar year in which the individual was certified, including that year. The three-year certification renewal period for individuals certified after January 1 in a given calendar will begin on January 1 of the following year to ensure that certified individuals have at least three full years to acquire their credit hours (see table below).



Date Certified (examples)	Renewal Year	Credit Reporting Deadline
January 1, 2020	2022	January 1, 2023
1/2 – 12/31, 2020	2023	January 1, 2024
January 1, 2021	2023	January 1, 2024
1/2 - 12/31, 2021	2024	January 1, 2025

If the credit hours required for certification renewal are not reported prior to the renewal deadline, certification may be revoked by the MWPCP and the individual will be required to pass the applicable certification exam and meet all other program requirements to become certified.

The MWPCP will provide a form to report credit hours for attendance/participation at qualifying events. Credit hours can be reported at any time during the certification renewal period. Certified individuals requesting credit hours for a training event must provide a copy of the agenda that reflects the hours (to the nearest hour) of actual classroom or field training and information on the affiliation and qualifications of the instructor(s). For in-person training events, proof of attendance such as certificates and participant lists can be provided but are not required unless requested by the MWPCP during its review of certification renewal. For online training (videos, narrated presentations, etc.), evidence of completion/viewing must be provided in addition to agenda and instructor qualifications. A participant list for each MWPCP-sponsored training event will be developed upon completion of the event. All certified individuals will be automatically credited with the hours associated with these MWPCP-sponsored events if they registered at the event.

The MWPCP will maintain a database of approved credit hours for each certified individual and inform them annually of their credit hour balance.