



Alaska Region

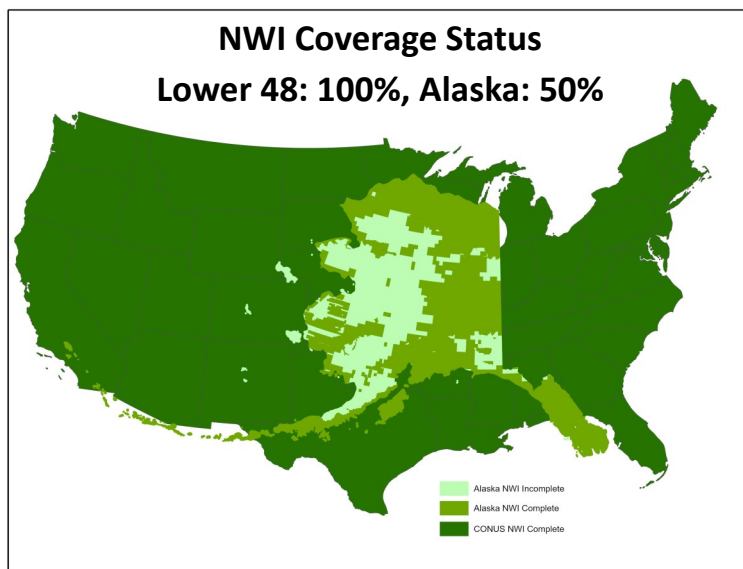
National Wetlands Inventory

January 2025 Update

Developing comprehensive and standardized wetlands data across Alaska

Fish and wildlife management, aviation and maritime safety, energy development, resource assessments, flood plain management and recreational activities all depend on access to accurate wetlands and hydrographic data. The geospatial data to support modern wetland and hydrography maps do not exist for much of Alaska, where natural resource management, community use and development interests intersect. Geospatial data provide federal agencies, the State of Alaska and local communities with scientific tools and information to ensure balanced use and stewardship of public and private lands.

The **National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)**, is the nation’s most comprehensive wetland and deepwater habitat dataset across the country. The geospatial dataset is part of the National Spatial Data Infrastructure. At this time, the entire contiguous 48 states have comprehensive coverage; however, only 50% of Alaska is included in the national database. Alaska is expected to have complete coverage by 2028.



Fast Facts**

Existing NWI Coverage: 200 million acres

Current NWI Projects: 267 million acres*

*Including areas undergoing updates

**Some NWI boundaries extend into the marine system and total acres may not match other Alaska area values

Value of the National Wetlands Inventory

- U.S. Army Corps of engineers estimates over \$8.25 million in annual cost savings by using the NWI in their workflow
- Project areas with out NWI have increased time and cost burdens for data collection
- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) recognizes the NWI supports streamlining the environmental review process
- Provides a [web based delivery system](#) for data dissemination where over 1,000,000 maps have been created
- NWI is used for:
 - * Natural resource management
 - * Energy exploration and production
 - * Transportation planning
 - * Telecommunication Sites
 - * Recreational access and facility construction
 - * Comprehensive community plans

The NWI program integrates supporting information from mapping initiatives into its wetlands inventories. This includes digital imagery, elevation and hydrography developed in coordination with the Alaska Mapping Executive Committee (AMEC) and Alaska Geospatial Council (AGC).

The AGC [Alaska Wetlands Working Group](#) (AWWG) has developed a statewide strategy with a goal of completing the National Wetland Inventory across the state by 2029. The group is composed of federal, state and local government representatives as well as consultants, product vendors and research professionals. With the strategy in place, the group is now focused on outreach and seeking financial investments.

Sydney Thielke, Regional Wetlands Coordinator
Sydney_Thielke@fws.gov
907-229-6308