

**Department of State Lands
Wetland Program Development**

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends the Joint Committee on Ways and Means approve the submission of a federal grant application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for up to \$348,647 for wetlands management improvement, and increase the Federal Funds expenditure limitation by \$133,000.

The Department and the EPA have partnered in wetland projects since 1991. Grant funds for this period are available for work resulting in streamlined, universally-understood assessment methods that will support informed decision making for cost effective restoration work. Funds also cover developing stream assessment tools for mitigating stream impacts.

The EPA requires a 25% match, which would be met by existing agency staff performing normal duties, and by an outside partner. Awards are to be announced in late September. Assuming the Department is successful, work would begin in October 2015. One limited duration part-time position would be covered by the federal funds.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends approving the grant application submission and including limitation in the 2015 close-of-session bill to support work through February 2016. It is unusual to recommend limitation at the same time as the grant application, but the Department has no other Federal limitation to use. The Department of Administrative Services is requested to unschedule the limitation until the agency has notified LFO and DAS of a successful award. If additional limitation is needed, the agency may request it in February 2016.