

Curriculum Vitae – Craig Cowden

Personal Details:

Name: Craig Cowden
Profession: Wetland Ecologist
Date of Birth: 14 March 1978
Nationality: South African



Key Qualifications:

Seventeen years' experience in ecosystem functioning and management, specializing in wetland ecosystems. Involvement in a variety of studies to determine practical and applied ecological solutions. Specialist input into various studies, focusing on:

- Mapping and infield delineation of wetland habitat within various regions of Southern Africa, including South African provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Free State, Eastern Cape and Gauteng, and Lesotho for inventory and management purposes.
- Assessment of various wetland ecosystems to highlight potential impacts, within current and proposed landscape settings, and recommend appropriate mitigation and offsets based on assessing wetland ecosystem service delivery (functioning) and ecological health/integrity.
- Assessment of various wetland ecosystems to plan appropriate wetland rehabilitation activities and performance evaluation and monitoring of wetland rehabilitation projects.
- Literature reviews and research relating to impacts, best management practices, promoting biodiversity, monitoring and evaluating rehabilitation within wetland ecosystems.

Education and Training:

- 2005 Wetland Assessments to Inform Wetland Rehabilitation Planning - University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- 2001 Forest Certification Course - SGS Qualifor.
- 2001 Wetland Rehabilitation Planning and Implementation - Mondi Wetlands Project.
- 1999 B.Sc. (Agriculture) University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg – Four-year Degree (Honours equivalent), majoring in Wildlife Science & Zoology.

Professional Memberships:

- Professional Natural Scientist (Pr.Sci.Nat) in Ecological Science - The South African Council for Natural Scientific Professions (Reg. No. 400197/05)
- Founding Member - South African Wetland Society
- Member - Society of Wetland Scientists (International)
- Member - Society of Ecological Restoration (International)

Professional Awards:

- National Wetland Award under the "Stewardship" category awarded in October 2013 in recognition of the wetland rehabilitation associated with the Greater Edendale Mall development.
- Mondi Wetlands Programme acknowledgment of "Contributions towards wetland conservation" awarded in June 2012

Experience Record:

2009 to Present: GroundTruth (GT) - Management of the wetland division within GT.

2001 to 2009: Land Resources International (LRI) - Management of the environmental division within LRI.

Examples of Projects:

- Implementation of wetland rehabilitation planning in various provinces, including Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Gauteng, and Western Cape for the national Working for Wetlands Programme from 2005-2012, 2016-2018.
- Wetland specialist input and support to Burundi Nature Action and Association pour la Conservation de la Nature au Rwanda on behalf of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature – Netherlands Committee.
- Assessments of impacted wetland systems and rehabilitation planning to inform the offset requirements for proposed development at the Cascades Mall in Pietermaritzburg.
- Assessments of impacted wetland systems and rehabilitation planning to inform the offset requirements for Exxaro coal mining operations.
- Assessment of wetland systems potentially affected by the proposed expansion of Lumwana Mine near Solwezi, Zambia on behalf of SRK Consultants.
- Water Research Commission research project on developing a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess wetland rehabilitation in South Africa.

Examples of Publications & Conference Presentations:

- Cowden C. Wetland specialist input into the Working for Wetlands rehabilitation planning cycle. 21st National Wetlands Indaba, Hoedspruit, Mpumalanga, October 25-28, 2016.
- Cowden C, Kotze DC, Ellery WN & Sieben EJJ. 2014. *Assessment of the long-term response to rehabilitation of two wetlands in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa*. African Journal of Aquatic Science, Vol. 39, No. 3.
- Rivers-Moore NA, Cowden C. 2012. *Regional prediction of wetland degradation in South Africa*. *Wetlands Ecology and Management*, DOI 10.1007/s11273-012-9271-5.