



(AP) The state Senate is expected to vote this week on a sweeping bill that would make it easier to build on wetlands. The GOP bill makes a host of changes to the Department of Natural Resources' wetland-filling permit process. One of the most contentious calls for developers to submit a mitigation plan with their applications. The plans could range from creating new wetlands to supporting the DNR's wetland restoration work. Right now the DNR places a heavy emphasis on whether applicants can avoid or minimize damage to wetlands. Conservationists fear that mitigation would become the favored approach rather than avoiding damage. The bill's author, Sen. Neal Kedzie, says including a mitigation plan with an application doesn't guarantee a permit. The Senate is poised to take up the bill Tuesday.