



Wetlands Work for Us

Wetlands play a key role in recharging groundwater.

Playa lakes, a type of wetland, help recharge the High Plains Aquifer, which provides drinking water to 82% of people living above it, in parts of 8 states from South Dakota to Texas.

Wetlands store water and buffer communities from the worst impacts of severe floods.

Wetlands along the Mississippi River once stored at least 60 days of floodwater. Today they store only 12 due to filling and draining. As a result, there is more frequent flooding of towns and cities along the river.

Wetlands help reduce the pollution that flows downstream to rivers, lakes, bays and coastal waters.

Without the filtering capabilities of the Congaree Bottomland Hardwood Swamp in South Carolina, nearby communities would need to build a \$5 million wastewater treatment plant.

Wetlands play a key role in fishing, agriculture and recreation.

Wetlands provide important food products like cranberries, blueberries, fish and rice. They also provide food, water and shelter for species like striped bass, peregrine falcon, otter and black bear.

It is estimated that half of the original wetland area in the lower 48 states has already been lost.

Learn more about how you can protect wetlands where you live:

NEEFusa.org

Sources:
EPA, USGS, NOAA