

# What is a wetland?

An area that is saturated with water that under normal conditions, is able to support a prevalence of vegetation and animals. In the United States, there are approximately 100 M acres of wetland left and they fall into four general categories:

1. **Marshes** - dominated by soft-stemmed vegetation.
2. **Swamps** - dominated by woody plants.
3. **Bogs** - freshwater with evergreen trees and shrubs.
4. **Fens** - freshwater with grasses, sedges, reeds, and wildflowers.



**SUMMIT  
SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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# Keeping Wetlands Healthy



OHIO WETLANDS ASSOCIATION

# The Benefits



**Water Quality** - wetland vegetation can filter and remove as much as 90% of dissolved nutrients.



**Flood Control** - an acre of wetland can store 1-1.5 million gallons of floodwater.



**Fish & Wildlife Habitat** - up to one-half of North American bird species nest or feed in wetlands.



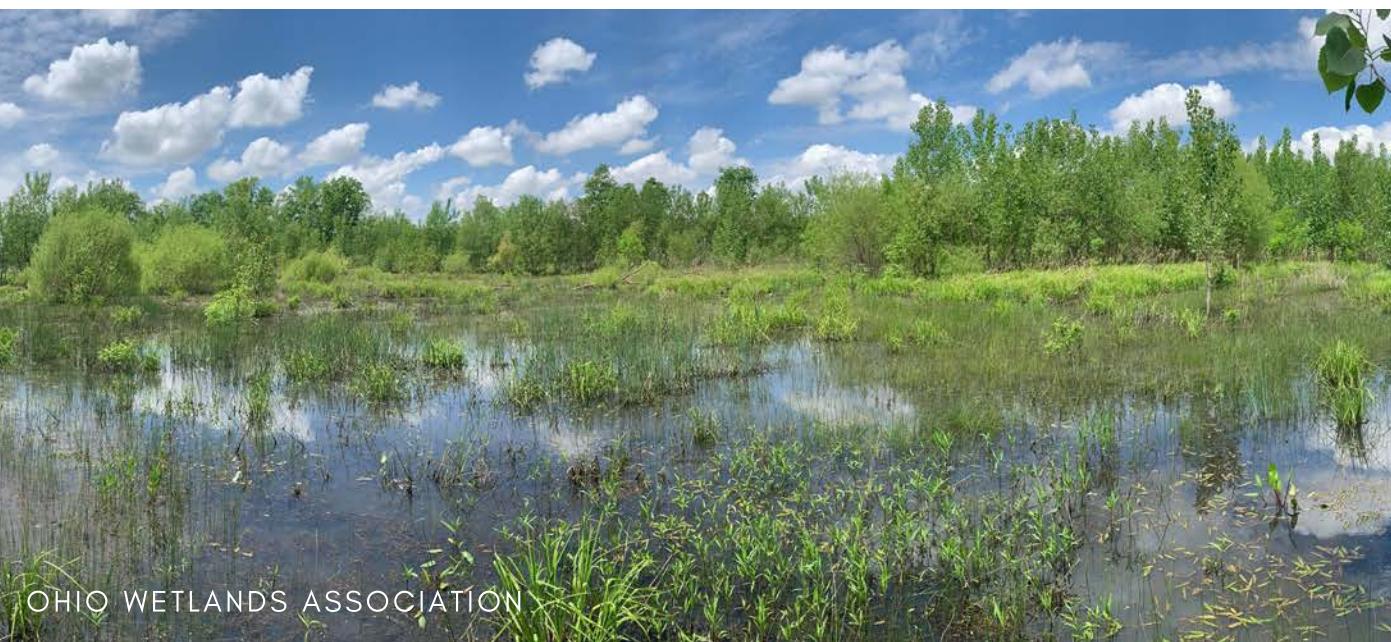
**National Economy** - in 1991, wetland-related ecotourism produced about \$59 billion dollars.



**Water Resources** - maintain surface water flow during dry periods.



**Research & Education** - observe the natural history and life cycles of diverse species.



# The Threats



Deposition of fill material for development.



Drainage for development, farming, and mosquito control.



Diversion of flow to or from wetlands.



Addition of impervious surfaces in the watershed



Runoff from urban, agricultural, silvicultural, and mining areas.



Old landfills and dumps that leak toxic substances.



Grazing by domestic animals.



Introduction of nonnative plants that compete with natives.

# What Can You Do?



INSTALL SIGNAGE to designate and draw attention to preserved wetland.



REFRAIN FROM DUMPING any soil, tree branches, leaves, grass clippings, kitchen scraps, or any other wastes into the wetland or buffer areas.

Keep, or create with NATIVE PLANTS, at least a ten-foot unmowed buffer area bordering the wetland to filter out many pollutant before they enter.



SEEK TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE from your local Soil & Water Conservation District, Environmental Protection Agency, or Army Corps of Engineers.

