

Keeping Wetlands Healthy

What You Can Do to Make the Most of Wetland Habitat

Healthy Wetlands: What can you do?

Anyone can help. What you do depends on your situation.

- ✓ Recognize and protect local small wetlands in your neighborhood.
- ✓ Prevent storm water runoff from going directly into wetlands.
- ✓ Avoid polluting local storm water:
 - Do not use fertilizer near wetlands & areas draining to wetlands
 - Properly dispose of used oil, paint, or other chemicals
- ✓ Promote wetland values, not simply needing improved drainage.
- ✓ Promote wetland restoration in areas previously drained.
- ✓ Use native vegetation as buffers, including along shorelines and streams, instead of hard materials.
- ✓ Manage restored wetlands for optimal habitat.



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Healthy Wetlands: What can you do?

- ✓ Eliminate non-native, invasive species, including:
 - Reed Canarygrass
 - Phragmites
 - Purple Loosestrife
 - Hybrid Cattail
- ✓ Replace with native species like:
 - Swamp Milkweed
 - Cardinal Flower
 - Fox Sedge
 - Fowl Manna Grass
- ✓ Volunteer at local parks & natural areas to help control invasives



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Wetland Restoration Projects

- ✓ Landowner Contact
- ✓ Site Visit and Evaluation
- ✓ Funding: Cost-share and Partnerships
- ✓ Site Survey and Design
 - Make sure it's possible!
 - Does the site impact the neighbors?
- ✓ Completion

- ✓ In many cases good wetland soils have a good seed bank and do not require extensive plantings.

Wetland Management

- ✓ Define Goals, Capabilities, and Priorities
- ✓ Consider Habitat Types, Species Guilds, and Associated Management
- ✓ Incorporate into Project Designs and Management Strategies

Wetland Habitat: What do wetlands really look like?

Early Succession

- Mudflats, moist soils, emergent marsh
- Requires regular disturbance
- Drawdowns, disking, prescribed fire, herbicides

Mid-Late Succession

- Scrub-shrub/swamp, riparian, deep open systems
- Less disturbance
- Often self-regulating, but not always

Ephemeral and Permanent

Wetland Habitat Improvement

Invasive Species Control

- Specialty herbicides
- Water level management

Succession Management

- Control woody encroachment*
- Reduce monocultures

Structure and Diversity

- Appropriate water depths
- Prescribed fire, sustained water, etc.

Timing is everything!

Wildlife Considerations

Waterfowl

- Migrating waterfowl need energy above all.
- Breeding waterfowl need nesting and brooding habitat

Shorebirds

- Some require depths less than ½"
- Peak migrations late Feb-mid May, late Aug-mid Oct

Marsh Birds

- Sustained water levels at intermediate levels

Furbearers

- Appropriate cover and water availability

Reptiles and Amphibians

- Consistency with water regimes and timing



Wildlife Considerations

Many species utilize wetlands in different ways and at different times, oftentimes without much management.

Whether it is a small rain garden or restored marsh, all wetlands have value to wildlife, insects and aquatic species.



Cost Sharing and Technical Assistance

- DNR Division of Fish & Wildlife
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- Local Soil & Water Conservation Districts and Watershed Groups

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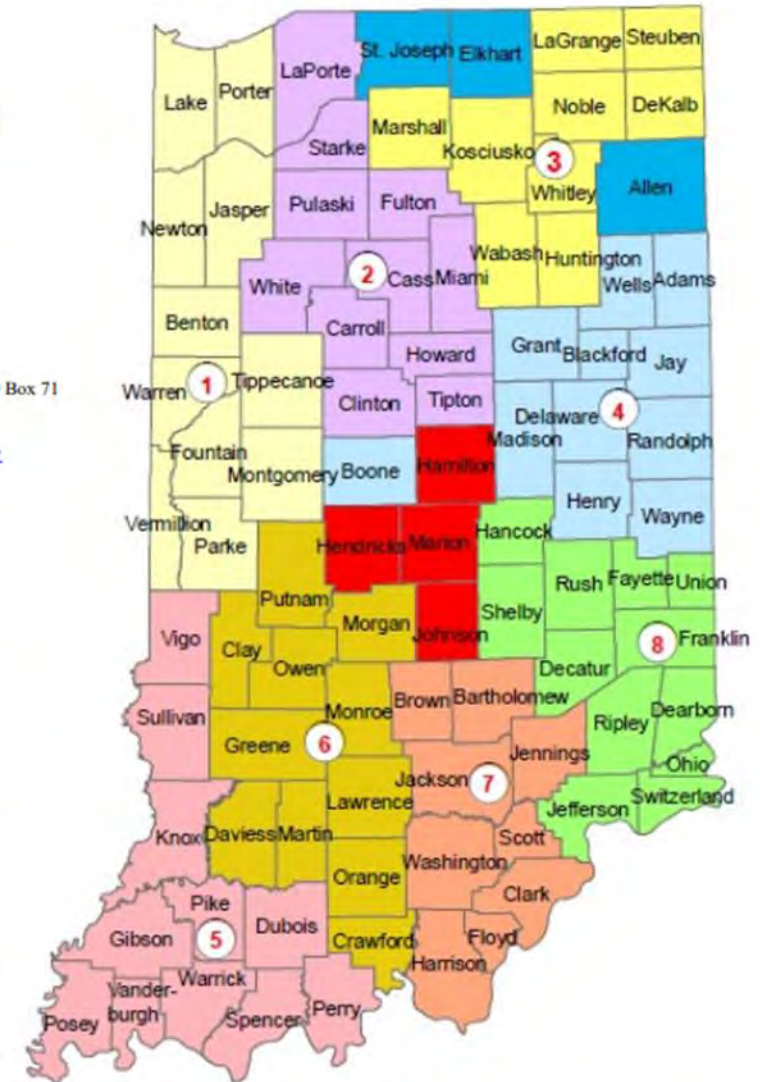
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Questions?