



McLane Creek
Nature trail



Our Mission

To conserve, sustain and protect our natural resources for the people of Thurston County through: rural and urban partnerships, volunteerism, cooperation, education, and technical and financial assistance.

Local Wetlands-

Black River- The largest freshwater wetland in Western Washington, the Black River has diverse habitat types including prairie oak woodlands, sphagnum bogs, alder bottoms, and wetland conifer forests. A number of rare plant species and protected frogs and minnows live in these wetlands.

Capitol Lake Park and Tumwater Falls-

These parks host a cattail marsh, freshwater estuary, Capitol Lake, the Deschutes River and the falls. The lake is located near downtown Olympia and is currently being studied to determine its feasibility to be restored to a functioning estuary.

Nisqually Wildlife Refuge- Just east of Olympia this refuge lies at the junction of the Nisqually River and south Puget Sound. Covering 3,000 acres the refuge provides resting and nesting areas for more than 275 migratory birds as well as habitat for many other species.

McLane Creek Nature Trail- Southwest of Olympia the McLane Creek Nature Trail is home to series of beaver ponds surrounded by mixed coniferous and deciduous forests, marshes and swamps.

Additional Resources-

EPA Wetlands Information

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/>

US Fish and Wildlife Wetland Information

<http://wetlandfws.er.usgs.gov/index.html>

Nisqually Wildlife Refuge

<http://www.fws.gov/nisqually/>

Thurston Conservation District

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Wetlands in Thurston County

Thurston Conservation District

LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL PROBLEMS

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Photos by-
Great Blue Heron- © 2000 Don Getty
Bulrush- © 2003 George W. Hartwell
Pacific Tree Frog- © 1996 Glenn McCrea
Nisqually Wildlife Refuge- Greg Pelletier

What is a Wetland?

A wetland is an area that is flooded or saturated by surface or groundwater frequently enough to support vegetation that is adapted to life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs, estuaries and similar areas.

Wetlands are highly productive habitats commonly having a great deal of biodiversity.

Functions of Wetlands~

- Absorb huge quantities of water
- Filter ground water; removing heavy metals, chemicals, pesticides and excess nutrients.
- Stabilize shorelines and prevent erosion
- Provide essential habitat for feeding, nesting, cover and breeding for fish, amphibians, birds, reptiles and invertebrates.
- Serve as a nursery and feeding area for anadromous fish such as salmon and steelhead trout.



Tree frogs resting on a cattail.
© 1996 Glenn McCrea

Interesting Facts about Wetlands

-Half of North American bird species nest and feed in wetlands.

- 31% of plant species in North America can be found in wetlands, even though only 5% of our land surfaces are wetlands.

-Wetlands serve as valuable habitat for mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, fish and many invertebrates.

-In the United States 60,000 acres of wetlands are lost each year.



Photo by Don Getty

Hazards to Wetlands

Hydrological Alterations~

- Development involving filling, draining, dredging, and stream channelization.
- Diking, damming and dividing flow to or from wetlands.
- Drainage for development and mosquito control.
- Addition of impervious surfaces, which increase water and pollutant runoff into surrounding wetlands.

Pollutants~

- Air pollution from cars, factories and power plants.
- Runoff from urban, agricultural and mining.

Vegetation~

- Grazing by domestic and farm animals.
- Introduction of non-native plant species.
- Removal of vegetation for peat mining.

What can you do?

- Restore and preserve wetlands on your property
- Support local restoration projects.
- Encourage neighbors and developers to protect the function and value of wetlands in your local watershed
- Reduce the amount of fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides used in your lawn and garden.