

Wetlands play a vital role in our environment. While establishing obvious habitat areas for birds, mammals and fish, wetlands also provide areas of groundwater replenishment, water purification, shoreline stabilization and stream flow maintenance.

What is a Wetland?

Wetlands are inundated by surface ground water long enough over a year to support vegetation that thrives in saturated soils. Wetlands generally include ponds, meadows, scrub shrub and forested areas.

Pond Wetlands

Pond wetlands will have standing water year around, usually six to ten inches deep. They create habitat for waterfowl such as ducks and geese. Animals such as frogs, turtles and salamanders also find pond wetlands an ideal place to live. The primary vegetation is sedges, grasses, rushes and cattails as well as submergent plants that may float just under the water surface.

Wet Meadow Wetlands

Wet meadows may have a wide range of hydrologic characteristics. They may be in the form of a marsh with substantial amounts of standing water, to that of a landscape dry enough to walk on in late summer. All wet meadows are recognizable by their grass-like vegetation of sedges and rushes. Here habitat is created for many creatures. The vegetation in wet meadows is particularly well suited for filtering sediments and pollutants, making them quite important to water quality.

Scrub Shrub Wetlands

These wetlands are dominated by woody vegetation under 20' tall. This can include shrubs such as red-osier dogwood and willow, as well as young trees or trees that have been stunted by poor growth conditions. They can be a very valuable habitat for birds while their tangle of vegetation can provide important browse and shelter for small to midsize mammals.

Forest Wetlands

Forest wetlands are dominated by woody vegetation over 20' tall and are some of the most difficult wetlands to recognize because they often support plants that can grow in upland areas as well as wetlands. These areas provide important habitat for many woodland creatures like birds and mammals. Snags (dead standing trees) are important in this area for the woodpeckers and other birds and animals that feed on the insects living inside them.

The Green Zone map is on page 2.

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Wetlands Plants

Plants are characteristic for Wetlands.

Trees	Wetland Location*
Quaking Aspen (<i>Populus tremuloides</i>)	SS,F
Engelmann Spruce (<i>Picea engelmannii</i>)	F
MacKenzie Willow (<i>Salix eriocephala</i>)	SS,F
Drummond Willow (<i>Salix drummondiana</i>)	S,F

Shrubs	Wetland Location*
Red-osier Dogwood (<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>)	SS,F
Golden Currant (<i>Ribes aureum</i>)	SS,F
Nootka Rose (<i>Rosa nutkana</i>)	SS,F
Douglas Spirea (<i>Spiraea douglasii</i>)	SS,F
Common Snowberry (<i>Symphoricarpos alba</i>)	SS,F

Grasses and Forbes	Wetland Location*
Idaho Fescue (<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>)	SS,F
Bluejoint Reedgrass (<i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i>)	S
Cusick Sedge (<i>Carex cusickii</i>)	WM,F
Bladder Sedge (<i>Carex utriculata</i>)	P,WM,SS,F
Inflated Sedge (<i>Carex versicaria</i>)	P,WM,SS,F
Creeping Spikerush (<i>Eleocharis palustris</i>)	P
Scouring Rush (<i>Equisetum laevigatum</i>)	F
Northern Bedstraw (<i>Galium boreale</i>)	SS
Northern Mannagrass (<i>Glyceria borealis</i>)	P
Tall Mannagrass (<i>Glyceria elata</i>)	WM,F
Rocky Mountain Iris (<i>Iris missouriensis</i>)	WM
Indian Pond Lily (<i>Nuphar polysepalum</i>)	P
Small-fruited Bulrush (<i>Scirpus microcarpus</i>)	SS,F
Common Cattail (<i>Typha latifolia</i>)	WM,P
American Speedwell (<i>Veronica americana</i>)	WM,SS
Violets (<i>Viola spp.</i>)	SS

* Wetland Location Key

P = Pond Wetland
 F = Forest Wetland
 WM = Wet Meadow Wetland
 SS = Scrub – Shrub Wetland

The Wetlands are #3 a, b, c, d on The Green Zone map. The Green Zone is located at the Spokane Conservation District and WSU/Spokane County Extension, 210 & 222 N. Havana, Spokane WA 99202 (509) 535-7274 (SCD) (509) 477-2048 (WSU)

Wetlands (continued)

THE GREEN ZONE

