

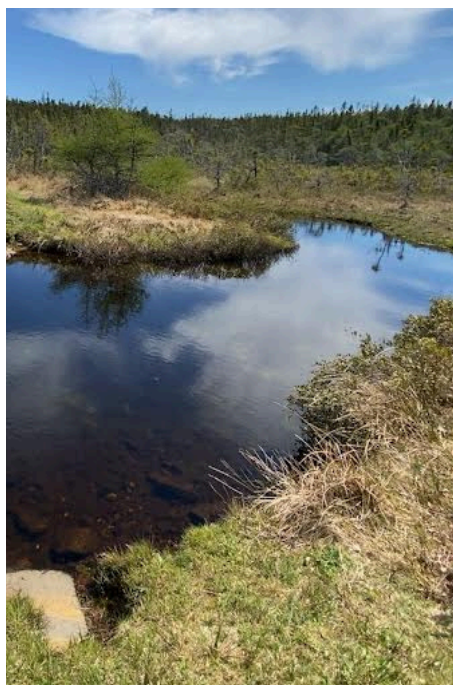
THE IMPORTANCE OF WETLANDS

TO SOCIETY, ECOSYSTEMS, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT



SOCIETY

Wetlands, such as marshes and swamps, help to naturally purify water by acting as a filter. These habitats slow the flow of water where by aquatic vegetation traps sediments and pollutants, and microorganisms break down the contaminants.



ECOSYSTEMS

In Newfoundland, wetland habitats are hotspots for a wide variety of biodiversity. These ecosystems are highly biologically productive, given that they provide ample food sources for an array of birds, mammals, amphibians and fish species. Wetlands also support many plant species, which have adapted to thrive in waterlogged and low-oxygen soils.

WHAT IS A WETLAND?

Wetlands are areas of land habitat that are either permanently or seasonally covered by water. The wetlands of our province are categorized into 5 different classifications: Pond, Fen, Marsh, Bog and Swamp. It is very important to protect these sensitive habitats as they play a critical role in our society, ecosystems, safety and environment.

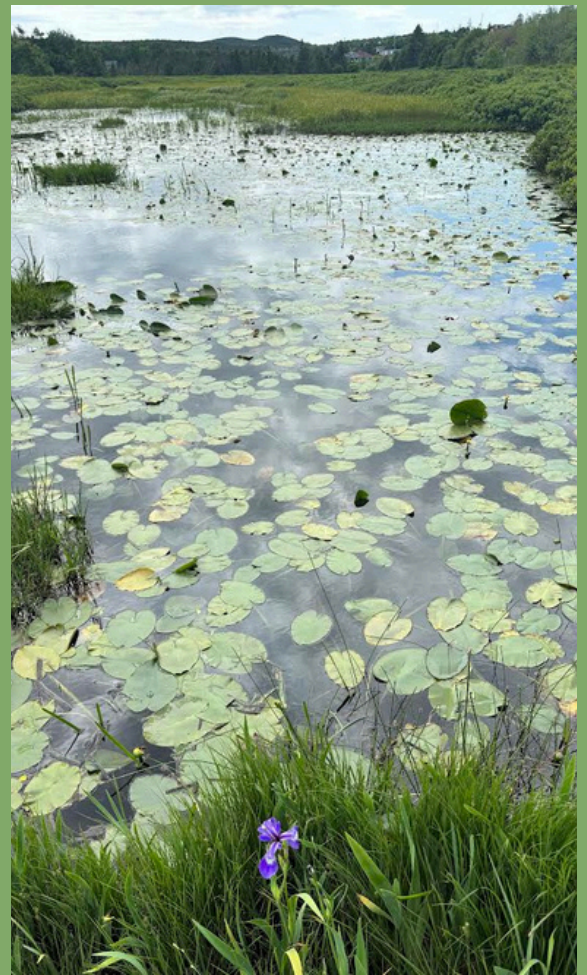


SAFETY

- During heavy rainfall or spring snow melts, bogs, fens, marshes and swamps act as natural buffers that slow and absorb surface runoff, which prevents flooding of communities and habitats.
- The dense root systems of wetland aquatic vegetation stabilizes soil along the shoreline and riverbanks, protecting land from being washed away.

ENVIRONMENT

- Wetland soils and plants are incredibly efficient at storing and absorbing greenhouse gases, preventing it from being released into the atmosphere.
- The water cycle is greatly influenced by wetland habitats given that they naturally absorb excess rainwater and slowly release it, keeping rivers flowing during dry spells and replenishing groundwater.



Canada is home to 25% of the world's wetlands, with about 1.25 million km² of wetland habitat!

