

# Why Save the Wetlands?

by Dinah Garton

Wetlands have many names—marshes, bogs, swamps—but perhaps we should just call them important! For example, wetlands help nearby communities by storing fresh water. Just one acre of wetland holds 1 to 1.5 million gallons of water! In this way, wetlands help prevent water shortages. Also, when rivers overflow, wetlands absorb and store the extra, fast-moving water. Then they release it slowly back into the environment. This helps reduce the risk of flooding and keeps communities dry.



**Highlight in yellow the events that occur in wetlands when rivers overflow.**  
**Highlight in green the results of the interaction between events.**



Events

Results



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## Why Save the Wetlands?

(continued)

Wetlands also benefit communities by filtering water, removing dirt and other solids from it. When polluted runoff from cities flows into the wetlands, the dense plant growth slows it down. Because the water is moving slowly, some of the dirt and pollutants settle on the wetland floor. Microorganisms in the soil then break down some of these pollutants to make them less harmful. This process helps to remove both dirt and pollutants from the water.



Highlight in yellow the events that occur when runoff flows into a wetland.  
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