



**Fisheries
& Habitat
Conservation**

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Fisheries and Habitat Conservation

National Wetlands Inventory

Developing and Providing Wetlands Information

Wetlands provide society with countless benefits.

Determining their location and status aids in developing policies to conserve these valuable habitat resources.

The National Wetland Inventory:

Strategically updates existing wetlands data in areas experiencing substantial habitat change;

Determines wetlands status and trends nationally, regionally, and in priority watersheds; and

Assesses environmental factors that put wetlands at risk of being lost.

Wetlands are the cornerstone of many important ecosystems. They provide numerous ecological and economic benefits. Effective conservation of our Nation's remaining wetlands requires consistent, reliable information about their location, characteristics and values. Wetlands maps produced by the National Wetlands Inventory are tools used to manage, protect, and restore natural resources.

WHAT DOES THIS PROGRAM DO?

- Generates wetland information used by Federal and State agencies, Tribes, Congress, industry, resource professionals and the general public.
- Assists in the protection, restoration and management of wetlands resources.
- Coordinates the development and distribution of wetland maps.

HOW DO WE DO IT?

- Gather wetlands information from high-altitude imagery.
- Generate consistent, reliable information about wetland location, characteristics and values.
- Build partnerships with Federal and State agencies, Tribes, industry, local governments and private organizations to develop current wetlands information.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE ALREADY?

- Produced paper maps showing wetland locations and their characteristics for about 91 percent of the conterminous United States and 33 percent of Alaska.
- Provided seamless digital wetland map information for 46 percent of the nation over the Internet.
- Produced three National reports on wetland status and trends.
- Provided the public with dozens of regional, State, and local reports on wetland status and trends.
- Developed state-of-the-art master geodatabase and viewing tools.
- Updated wetlands maps so that about 3 percent of the nation has digital maps that are 10 years old or less.

HOW DOES THE PUBLIC BENEFIT?

- Providing information for developing wetland conservation policies and programs.
- Increased access to wetlands information for use in decision-making.
- Enhanced quality of life through sound natural resource planning.

WHAT MORE CAN WE DO?

- Improve the value of wetlands information by updating maps in key areas experiencing substantial development.
- Identify areas in watersheds where wetlands can be restored to enhance the quality of local environments, and assess factors affecting habitat quality.
- Provide information on the maps about man-made and natural factors that affect the quality of wetlands.
- Strengthen conservation mapping partnerships.

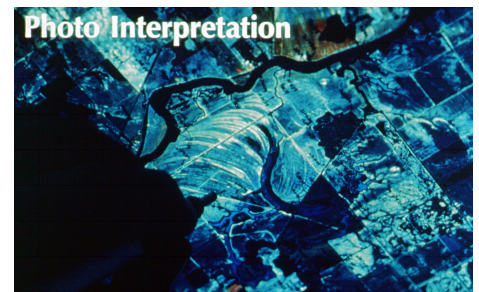
For more information about the National Wetlands Inventory, contact USFWS, Fisheries and Habitat Conservation, at 703/358-2161 or visit us on the Internet at <http://www.fws.gov/nwi/>.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
800/344-WILD
<http://www.fws.gov>**

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Above: Wetlands occur across the landscape.



Above: Information is gathered from aerial photography.



Above: Up-to-date wetland maps help solve quality of life issues.