

WETLANDS VALUES and FUNCTIONS - Quick Summary

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Canada's Columbia Wetlands

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--SOURCE OF PHOTOSYNTHESIS and BENEFICIAL NUTRIENTS Fisheries, migrating birds and species seeking seasonal habitats are nourished by wetlands.

--FLOOD REGULATION Wetlands control of rain, snowmelt and floodwater releases is a more effective and less costly mitigation than man-made dams. High flood risks will increase if wetlands are lost and degraded.

--GROUNDWATER RECHARGE and SILT FILTERING Wetlands resupply nature's water storage tanks while filtering deposits and sediment coming from upstream.

--FILTRATION Wetlands' absorption of nitrogen and phosphorous provides cleaner water downstream for drinking water, aquifers and reservoirs.

--CLIMATE REGULATION Wetlands' absorption of heat by day and release of heat at night moderates local climates.

--CARBON SEQUESTRATION Many wetlands harbor carbon within their plant communities and soils and thus reduce climate change effects.

--SUSTENANCE PROVISION Wetlands supply food, water, fiber and timber for construction, fuel and medicinal products.

--CULTURAL VALUES Aesthetic, spiritual, recreational and educational values of wetlands have nourished human populations through the ages.