

Wetlands filter excess pesticides and nutrients. Many plants and animals find a home in wetlands.

A wetland is simply any area where water covers the soil or keeps it saturated for a least two or three weeks during the growing season. You will usually find them anywhere where water accumulates at a rate faster than it drains away. Some are inundated year-round while others only hold water for brief periods in the spring. Wetlands dominated by grasses, cattails, and similar herbaceous vegetation are referred to as marshes, while wooded wetlands, dominated by shrubs and trees, are called swamps.

Wetlands filter chemicals, excess nutrients, and sediment from flowing water, protecting streams and drinking water sources. They also provide various wildlife habitat. Many farmers enhance their wetlands with nesting structures for ducks and other birds, put in plants and annual seeding to provide winter food and cover for wildlife, and establish native wildflowers to make the landscape more attractive.

George & Cathy Jaques have established a wetland on 38.7 acres of their farm in Salem Twp. The original restoration included excavation, a water control structure and a relatively small berm. A couple of years later a tube was added to "recharge" the area when the adjacent creek was high, but not out of its banks. Some excavation was done on the easement. The landscape is broken up with mounds and ridges of soil. The connected swales and depressions meander over the floodplain providing good migrating waterfowl habitat. Canada geese have nested on the site.