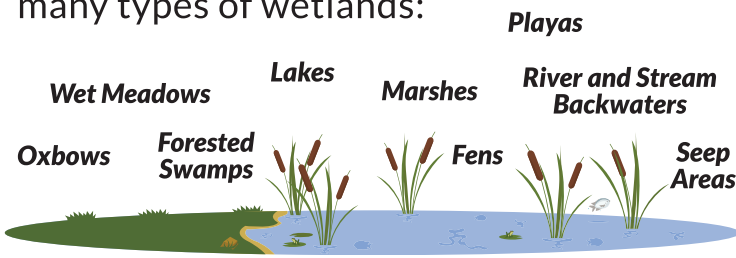


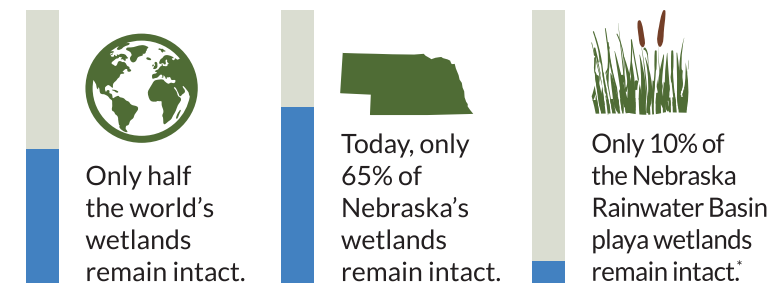
Clean water? Flood protection? Wildlife habitat? Groundwater recharge?

Not without wetlands

Nebraska has diverse wetlands across the state, in every county. There are many types of wetlands:



! Over the past 250 years, wetlands have declined at an alarming rate, mostly due to land conversion.



What we lose when we lose wetlands:

Sufficient clean water

95%

of Nebraska drinking water comes from groundwater, which is naturally filtered by wetlands

Wetlands filter pollutants from runoff and improve water quality in streams and the underground aquifer, reducing the need for costly treatment.

Groundwater recharge

Many wetlands slowly release water into the ground to recharge groundwater. Sandhills and playa wetlands recharge a significant portion of the state's Ogallala Aquifer.

Protection from disaster

Wetlands hold water, making flooding and soil erosion less likely.

Diverse wildlife

Nebraska is unique in that it possesses **three** major wetland complexes that are of international importance to wildlife.

Wetlands play an important role by providing habitat for threatened and endangered species.

70%

of the state's threatened and endangered species, such as piping plovers and whooping cranes, depend on wetlands.

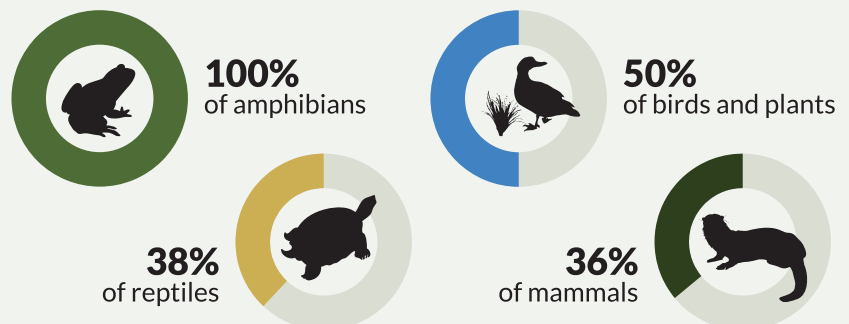
90%

The Platte River provides roosting habitat for 90% of the continent's sandhill crane population.

Revenue in tourism and hunting recreation

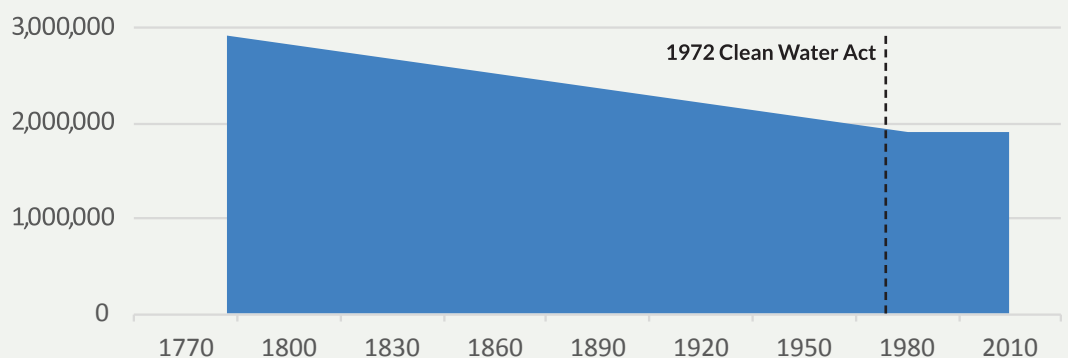
Streams and wetlands are major economic drivers because of their role in hunting, fishing, recreation, and agriculture. In the Rainwater Basin landscape, every acre generates \$20 in revenue.

Nebraska species relying on wetlands



Because of the Clean Water Act, the Farm Bill, State Title 117, and other federal, state, and local protections, we have effectively slowed the rate at which we are losing wetlands.

Estimated acres of wetlands in Nebraska



More than **100,000 acres** conserved over the past 25 years

How we conserve wetlands:



Conservation Programs

Wetland conservation programs like the USDA's Wetland Reserve Easement Program (WRE, formerly called Wetlands Reserve Program or WRP), provide alternatives for flood-prone cropland, helping producers reduce input costs and maximize net farm income. There are numerous other voluntary incentive programs for wetland conservation provided by federal, state, and local agencies.

The City of Lincoln has recognized the importance of wetlands and is actively working to conserve them.

\$110 million

in grant funds, which pump money into local economies, have been awarded over the past 25 years to protect and restore wetlands. The Nebraska Environmental Trust is crucial in providing the required non-federal match to these federal sources.



Many communities have struggled with nitrates in drinking water and declining water tables, caused by a lack of wetland areas near their water source. Wetlands can help to address these water quality issues.

But we need to continue to conserve wetlands and maintain the funding for conservation programs or we will see a rapid decline once again.



The Nebraska Conservation Roundtable considers preserving wetlands to be a top priority because of their impact on Nebraska's fish and wildlife.

LEARN MORE AT NebraskaWetlands.com

Without wetlands...

quality of rivers and groundwater declines
less water for irrigation and drinking
loss of wildlife habitat
loss of recreational opportunities

increased flooding



*Approximately. Sources: A guide to Nebraska's wetlands and their conservation needs, Ted LaGrange, 2005. Wetlands program plan for Nebraska, Ted LaGrange, 2015. United States Environmental Protection Agency.