

Joshua Pettifor



Grace College

Royer and Lydia Allman

The Importance of Indiana's Wetlands

The State of Indiana is home to many different ecosystems by which it derives some of its defining characteristics. Wetlands play an invaluable role in preserving the state's identity by maintaining stability in the environment allowing the surrounding ecosystems to thrive.

Wetlands have many crucial roles in a healthy environment. One such example is that they act as a natural water filter. "A wetland's natural filtration process can remove excess nutrients before water leaves a wetland, making it healthier for drinking, swimming and supporting plants and animals" ("Economic Benefits of Wetlands" 1). In other words, wetlands purify water as it passes through by removing excess nutrients and sediment making larger bodies of water more suitable for aquatic life. Another environmental benefit attributed to wetlands is flood prevention. "Wetlands can play a role in reducing the frequency and intensity of floods by acting as natural buffers, soaking up and storing a significant amount of floodwater" ("Economic Benefits of Wetlands" 1). Wetlands give excess water a place to go so that the main bodies of water do not flood. This indirectly prevents erosion.

In regard to the specific role wetlands play in the state of Indiana, they are crucial to the state's success. The environmental benefits wetlands provide are extremely important to Indiana as farming is a central part of the state: "Indiana's farmers cultivated just over 15 million acres of farmland in 2017" ("About Indiana Agriculture"). Successful farms require just the right conditions which wetlands provide by helping to regulate the surrounding environment, preventing floods, and purifying water. These environmental benefits play into the state's economic success. Agriculture is an extremely large part of Indiana's economy as it "contributes an estimated \$31.2 billion" ("About Indiana Agriculture"). The economic success would be unattainable if it weren't for the wetland's ability to maintain environmental stability. Wetlands

facilitate the productivity of Indiana's farms by helping to mitigate the effects of environmental factors beyond the control of farmers.

Indiana's wetlands are irreplaceable in terms of their environmental impact. A self-regulating environment has immeasurable value when it comes to agriculture. The state of Indiana can attribute much of its economic success as well as its agricultural identity to the wetlands' impact on the environment.

Works Cited

- “Economic Benefits of Wetlands,” *United States Environmental Protection Agency*, www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2016-02/documents/economicbenefits.pdf. Accessed 20 July 2021.
- “About Indiana Agriculture,” *Indiana State Department of Agriculture*, 2021, www.in.gov/isda/about/about-indiana-agriculture/. Accessed 20 July 2021.