



# CLOSE TO HOME

## *Vegetation And Sediment In Wetlands Near Residential Areas*

**The City receives many questions every year about what residents can do to the wetlands near their homes. The answer is that the best thing to do for a wetland is to leave it alone. Toward that end, we hope the following information is helpful.**

Wetlands have many functions and are important resources. Wetlands are natural areas that hold and filter rainwater, protect shorelines from erosion, recharge groundwater, and provide habitat for fish, birds, frogs, and other animals. Because of their importance, any alteration to a wetland is regulated under State and/or Federal law.

When people think of wetlands, they often think of open water and ducks. However, not all wetlands have open water ([www.bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/publications/wetland.pdf](http://www.bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/publications/wetland.pdf)).

Some wetlands are only wet in the spring. Some wetlands have grasses, wildflowers, cattails, or other vegetation growing throughout the area. While some residents are interested in native plants and enjoy the different vegetation of the wetland near their home, others may think it looks messy or weedy. However, this vegetation provides a critical function to filtering water, providing habitat for wildlife, and can keep the geese out of your lawn.

Many wetlands in the City have a storm sewer pipe discharging to the wetland. This can cause sand and other debris to be deposited near the pipe in the wetland. While sediment or garbage deposited from a storm sewer system can generally be cleaned out, excavating a wetland simply to remove vegetation generally cannot be completed. This type of activity is regulated under State and Federal rules as a negative impact to the wetland. These rules prohibit excavation of the wetland and/or the removal of the vegetation for aesthetic purposes. Additionally, new wetland would need to be created to mitigate for the wetland impact. Therefore, the City does not remove wetland vegetation or excavate out wetlands.

The City is working to protect wetlands and water quality throughout the City. Therefore, the City does evaluate the storm sewer outfalls on a regular, rotating basis. If you have concerns about sediment or garbage being deposited into a wetland, please call City Hall.

