

Door County Coastal Wetlands Resources

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DOOR COUNTY WETLAND FACTS

What are wetlands?

The Wisconsin State legislature defines wetlands as:

"an area where water is at, near, or above the land surface long enough to be capable of supporting aquatic or hydrophilic (water-loving) vegetation and which has soils indicative of wet conditions."

This definition addresses the essential, common characteristics of wetlands. But wetlands are extremely complex and dynamic ecosystems.

Every wetland is unique. Different wetlands often perform different functions dependent upon variables like wetland type, size, location, surrounding land use, and previous natural and human influences. Wetlands change over time and may perform different functions from year to year or season to season.

What benefits do wetlands provide?

Wetlands contribute to the social, economic and environmental health of our community in many ways. Wetlands help enrich the quality of life in Door County by:

- **Helping protect water quality** in lakes, streams and wells by filtering pollutants, nutrients and sediments.
- **Acting as shoreline buffers** to protect against erosion from waves and currents.
- **Reducing flood damage** by storing runoff from heavy rain and snow melts.
- **Providing essential breeding and migratory habitat** for fish and wildlife.



Cedar Ponds Conservation
Easement
Door County Land Trust
Photo by Terrie Cooper



North Bay wetland
The Nature Conservancy
Photo by Gerald H. Emmerich, Jr.

- **Supporting diversity of plant species and communities**, especially native plants.
- **Providing beautiful natural spaces and opportunities for recreation and education**, which enhances property values, tourism and quality of life.

Door County Wetland Statistics

- Wetlands in Door County occupy 50,990 acres, approximately 16% of the county's land area.
- 8,527 acres (17%) of Door County's wetlands are protected.
- Door County is one of 15 Wisconsin counties classified as a coastal wetland county.
- Approximately 2,500 acres of wetlands in Door County are ridge and swale wetland complexes, representing 51% of this wetland type in Wisconsin.
- Door County was identified as the most biologically diverse county in Wisconsin. The county contains the greatest number of endangered species and the greatest number of endangered organisms per square mile.

Sources:

- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources website, "Wetland Functional Values"
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources PUBL-WZ-001 93 REV, "Protecting Wetlands through Local Zoning for Cleaner Water, Fewer Floods, Better Fishing"
- Denise Scheberle's Report, "Developing an efficient and effective wetland protection program in Door County"
- Data extracted from DNR Natural Heritage Inventory in October 2000



The Ridges Sanctuary
Photo by Paul Regnier

DOOR COUNTY ORGANIZATIONS [\(return to top\)](#)

[The Nature Conservancy](#)

306 South Third Avenue
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
920.743.8695
<http://nature.org>

[Door County Land Trust](#)

P.O. Box 345
Ephraim, WI 54211
920.839.9990
www.doorcountylandtrust.org

[The Ridges Sanctuary, Inc.](#)

P.O. Box 152
Baileys Harbor, WI 54202-0152
920.839.2802
www.ridgesanctuary.org



The Ridges Sanctuary
Photo by Roy Lukes

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

110 S. Neenah Ave.
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
920.746.2860
www.dnr.state.wi.us

Natural Resource Conservation Services

421 Nebraska Street
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
920.388.0740
www.wi.nrcs.usda.gov

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Green Bay ES Field Office
1015 Challenger Court
Green Bay, WI 54311-8331
920.465.7440
<http://midwest.fws.gov/GreenBay>

Door County Wild Ones – Natural Landscapers, Ltd.

920.839.2191
www.for-wild.org/doorcounty

Door County Planning Department
421 Nebraska Street
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
920.746.2323

Door County Soil & Water Conservation Department
421 Nebraska Street
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
920.746.2214

RELATED STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS ([return to top](#))

The Nature Conservancy

Wisconsin Field Office
633 West Main Street
Madison, WI 53703
608.251.8140
<http://nature.org>

Wisconsin Wetlands Association

222 South Hamilton Street, Suite #1
Madison, WI 53703
608.250.9971
www.wiscwetlands.org



Shivering Sands wetland
The Nature Conservancy
Photo by Sonya Newenhouse

[Gathering Waters](#)

211 S. Paterson, Suite 180
Madison, WI 53703
608.251.9131
www.gatheringwaters.org

[River Alliance Of Wisconsin](#)

306 E. Wilson Street #2W
Madison, WI 53703
608.257.2424
www.wisconsinrivers.org

[Wisconsin Department of Administration,
Coastal Management Program](#)

101 East Wilson Street, 6th Floor
P.O. Box 7868
Madison, WI 53707-7868
608.266.2687
www.doa.state.wi.us/dhir/boir/coastal

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Kakagon Sloughs
Photo by S. Crispin

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[The League of Women Voters-Milwaukee County](#). 1995. *Wise Plans for Wisconsin's Wetlands*. Video. West Allis, WI.

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U.S. Department of Agriculture. No date. [Midwestern wetland flora: Field office guide to plant species](#). U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service, Midwest National Technical Center, Lincoln, Nebraska.

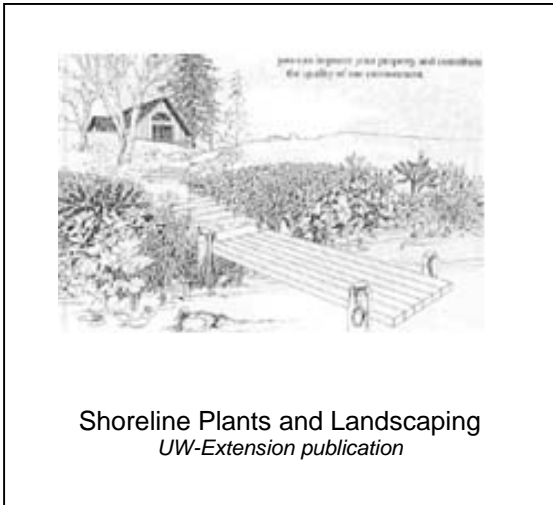
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Marsh Marigolds
Photo by Jim Wildeman

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New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission. 1993. [*A World in Our Backyard: A Wetlands Education and Stewardship Program*](#). Video and Book. EPA New England, Boston, MA.



Bailey's Harbor Conservation Easement
Door County Land Trust
Photo by Terrie Cooper

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