

The Farmer Cares for the Land

Identify the problem and the solution and the main cause and effect relationship in the information below.

Wetlands

Wetlands are low areas that are saturated with water. Marshes and swamps are wetlands. Most of the wetlands in Mississippi are the areas along creeks and rivers, between the water and the land. These are called **riparian areas**. Mississippi has some marsh and swamp areas, too.

Wetlands are an important part of the earth's ecosystem. They act like sponges to store water during the wet times of the year and release it into the aquifers and underground streams where we get most of our drinking water. When there are no wetlands to soak up the water, rains are more likely to turn into floods which destroy homes, businesses and farms. Plants that grow in wetlands hold the soil and help keep it from being washed away.

Wetlands also help purify water. They filter out harmful chemicals and wastes. Dirty water gets a good cleaning when it flows through a wetland.

Wetlands provide homes for many birds and animals that need wet places to grow and reproduce. They are important rest and food stops for many migrating birds. Many endangered plants and over $\frac{1}{3}$ of our endangered animals live in or use wetlands.

At the time of European settlement, there were about 215 million acres of wetlands in the lower 48 states. In the last 200 years, over 54 percent of these wetlands have been lost. Most were converted to agricultural uses. For many years people thought of wetlands as obstacles to farming and breeding grounds for mosquitoes. The government even encouraged landowners to turn wetlands into dry lands.

Now we know more about wetlands. We realize how much they help the environment, wildlife and humans. Federal laws have been passed to protect and preserve them. Some people don't like the wetland laws. People who have wetlands on their property think they should be able to use their property to earn money to support their families.

Problem	
Solution	
Cause	
Effect(s)	

This solution creates another problem. What is it? _____