

We Want the Wetlands

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For over ten years there has been a big wetland behind my house. My family has always loved it for the grasses, animals, and beauty during the different seasons. During the winter when it freezes over, we walk across. In the warmer months we kayak out in the open water. I have always known it to be there, and can't imagine what living here would be like without the character the wetland brings to our area. After the Water Drop trip, I see that we are all on the path to that becoming a possibility. We need to be protecting the wetlands for the life in them, to be appreciative of the water resources that we have, and to save ourselves from the damage we are causing now and to our futures.

The marshes, swamps, and bogs are home to many different species of life. We as humans are carelessly destroying their homes little by little. Invasive species are pushing out native animals and plants and not benefiting our community as well as the natives, if at all. Plants will be growing less which causes more flooding and fast moving water, which isn't good for more growth or animal life. The decline in plants is a vicious cycle that needs to be helped before it gets worse. With less life in the wetlands, there isn't as much there to control the quality of the water and its impact on us won't be as positive as it once was. Not to mention, the beauty of the wetlands becomes less noticeable to the people seeing it daily. The life in the wetland relies on its quality, but so does the life outside the water.

We expect water to always to be here, staying safe for us to drink, clean with, cook with, and so much more. What too many people don't understand is how limited our water resource actually is. It's strange to come to the realization that the foundation of life on Earth is so rare and getting to be scarce among all who need it. Something has to be done about this water crisis before it is too late.

Living in Warsaw, we rely so much on our rivers, lakes, and streams. It is especially important to have knowledge and awareness about the problem here. By teaching about the wetlands in schools and providing educational experiences, such as the Water Drop, students can begin to make a difference. To extend our efforts to save the wetlands, the community needs to be reached out to as well. Warsaw and Winona host events such as The Lakes Festival, and getting involved there is something easy and good for all of us. It can be as simple as just telling the people around you and encouraging them to spread the word. Other ways to help protect the wetlands in very easy ways would be to pick up after yourself and, if the chance arises, pick up after others when needed. When gardening, plant only native plants and use fertilizer low in phosphorous to prevent pollution to the watersheds.

Our water is a valuable resource that we have been taking for granted instead of caring for and protecting, and pretty soon that will catch up to us in a devastating way. We need to be taking action now to prevent a future where wetlands are rare and even more people go without clean water daily. It's up to us to spread the word, save the lives of the wildlife, and save ourselves from the destruction we are walking right into.