

Norway

Wetlands-

Wetlands are an underestimated, yet a very important natural resource. They

- * Reduce flooding by acting like a sponge, providing a buffer for excess water
- * Recharge surface and ground water in times of drought
- * Naturally filter water through chemical and biological action
- * Control the effects of erosion by filtering silt from water
- * Offer habitats to certain animals, plants and insects
- * Provide breeding, feeding and resting areas for wildlife
- * Supply unique recreational opportunities.

Alteration of wetlands can result in serious natural and economic outcomes.



Surface Waters and Watersheds

The land area that contributes water to a surface water body is known as a watershed. Development, other construction activity, agriculture and timber harvesting can all disturb a watershed and impact water quality. Soil erosion causes sediment and nutrients, such as phosphorus, that are naturally attached to soil particles to reach the waters. Sediment harms fish and destroys habitat. Phosphorus fertilizes lakes causing excessive algae and plant growth, thereby impacting fish, wildlife, and the enjoyment of our waters.

To reduce pollution:

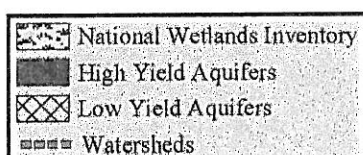
- prevent erosion
- reduce the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides
- control sewage disposal

Groundwater

Groundwater is water derived from precipitation that seeps through the soil and fills many small spaces in the soil or cracks (fractures) in bedrock below the water table. Groundwater provides a major source of drinking water. Most rural homes have wells that draw water from the soil or bedrock (bedrock aquifers). The public water supply that serves the downtown obtains water from a large sand and gravel aquifer that runs along the Little Androscoggin River Valley. Water from a large area in southeastern Norway and northern Oxford recharges the public well that is located in Oxford.

Groundwater is easily contaminated as substances seep through the soil and dissolve or mix with the groundwater. Contrary to popular belief, the soil does not filter or treat many substances very well, especially chemicals. Pollution prevention measures need to be undertaken to protect the groundwater in Norway. These include:

- controlling sewage disposal
- storing, using, and disposing of chemicals and hazardous materials
- preventing spills and leaks and cleaning them up quickly if they occur.



Water Resources

