

Types of Watercourses

Marshes

Located in low lying areas having a high water table and characterized by the absence of trees and shrubs. The dominant vegetation in marshes is soft-stemmed plants such as cattail, bull rush and pickleweed. However, some marshes can support woody vegetation.



Swamps

Located in low lying or gently sloping areas, but unlike marshes, are characterized by the presence of trees and shrubs. Soft-stemmed plants, such as tussock sedge, form the ground level vegetation.



Bogs

Unlike marshes and swamps, bogs are most often located in glacial kettle holes. Water pools in these depressions forming an acidic environment where many unique forms of vegetation grow. The most characteristic plant in a bog is Sphagnum moss. Sphagnum forms mats along the bog surface. New layers grow on top of the old, which subsequently become compacted with other plant debris to form peat. The depth of peat accumulation can exceed 40 feet.



Intermittent Watercourses

Recognized by a defined permanent channel and bank and the occurrence of two or more of the following characteristics:

1. Evidence of scour or deposits of recent alluvium or detritus;
2. The presence of standing or flowing water for a duration longer than a particular storm incident; and,
3. The presence of hydrophytic vegetation.

Intermittent watercourses provide valuable fishery habitat during the spring months and during times of high flow and are an integral part of the natural storm water drainage system.