Route 180 Westside Expressway Route Adoption

Wetlands

Wetlands have characteristics of both terrestrial (earth) and aquatic (water) systems. The water table is usually at or near the surface, and the land is covered by shallow water at least part of the year. Wetlands may be associated with oceans, rivers, lakes, or rainfall.

- In the past, humans have often regarded wetlands as wastelands, a source of mosquitoes, flies and bad odors. Many wetlands have been drained to provide land for agriculture and development. It is estimated that over 95% of historic wetlands in California have been destroyed.

- Today we recognize that wetlands serve as natural water treatment systems, trapping beneficial nutrients that increase the productivity of local soils: they are valuable biological resources in the Central Valley. They deserve our protection.

- Wetlands also function as habitat for a wide variety of specialized plants and animals. These plants and animals form an essential part of the food chain, supporting other valley, foothill, and mountain wildlife.

Caltrans