

## How Wetlands Are Valuable To You

- ❖ **FLOOD CONTROL** Many wetlands store floodwaters and then release them slowly. This reduces the height of downstream floods and lessens the risk of flash floods and protects landward oceanfront areas during hurricanes.
- ❖ **SEDIMENT CONTROL** Wetland vegetation binds the soil and slows the downstream movement of sediment.
- ❖ **POLLUTION CONTROL** Wetlands act as settling ponds, allowing fertilizers, pesticides, and other pollutants to be absorbed and broken down chemically.
- ❖ **WATER SUPPLY** Some wetlands are used as sources of domestic water. Others provide water for irrigation and livestock.
- ❖ **GROUND WATER RECHARGE** Wetlands are important recharge areas for underground fresh water aquifers.
- ❖ **FISH PRODUCTION** Many of the 4½ million acres of open water in inland wetlands provide an ideal habitat for sport fish. Estuaries are important nurseries for many sport fish.
- ❖ **WATERFOWL AND OTHER WILDLIFE PRODUCTION** Wetlands provide water, food, nesting, and resting areas for a wide array of game and nongame wildlife species, including some federally listed endangered species. 95% of New England's wildlife need wetlands during some part of their life cycle.
- ❖ **RECREATION** Wetlands provide areas for recreational activities such as hiking, canoeing, fishing, hunting, photography, and environmental education.
- ❖ **AESTHETICS** Most wetlands contain a wide variety of plants and animals providing great beauty and a place for recreational and visual enjoyment add to our quality of living on Cape Cod.