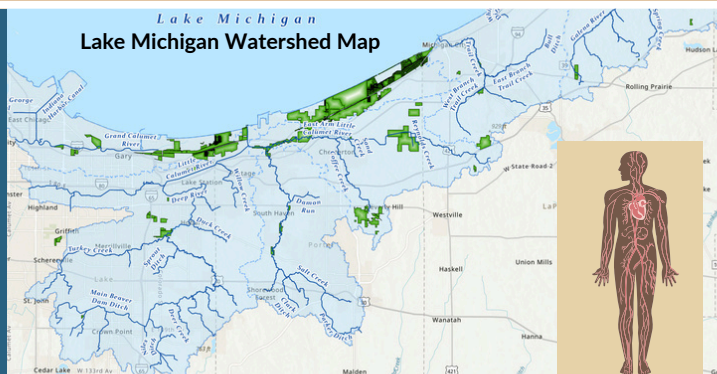


## Coastal Resiliency in Northwest Indiana You Live in a Coastal Community!

- Within the Lake Michigan Watershed, all streams and tributaries carry water to Lake Michigan, much like our veins carry blood to our heart
- As a member of the Lake Michigan Coastal Community, your actions have big impacts on our region's Coastal Resiliency
- Coastal Resiliency is the ability to respond, withstand, and adapt to the impacts of natural hazards within the Lake Michigan Watershed
- Save the Dunes has created a series of guides to help you learn about different coastal resiliency topics, and how you can be a coastal advocate in NWI



**Fens:** Wetlands that receive nutrients and water input from groundwater

### What Is A Wetland?

An area of land that is either permanently, seasonally, or intermittently flooded by water.  
Examples include:

**Marshes :** Wetlands that are dominated by herbaceous plants such as grasses, rushes, or sedges

**Bogs:** Wetlands that receive all or most of their water from precipitation

**Swamps:** Wetlands that are dominated by woody plants

### Fun Facts

- Wetlands can hold up to 1.5 million gallons of water per acre, which helps reduce flooding in their ecosystems
- Wetlands act as natural filters for pollutants such as heavy metals and can store carbon



### Wetland Critters

- 40% of all plant and animal species live or breed in wetlands, including birds, frogs, salamanders, and more



### Wetlands And Coastal Resiliency

- Wetlands act as natural sponges, absorbing excess water during heavy rainfalls and storms
  - By doing so, they help prevent flooding in nearby neighborhoods by reducing the volume and velocity of floodwaters



- Wetlands filter and purify water by trapping sediments and pollutants, which improve water quality
  - This can benefit neighborhoods by providing cleaner water for drinking and recreation

# What Can You Do As A Homeowner?

- **If your house has a septic system, be septic smart!**
  - Caring for and maintaining your septic system is essential as it impacts your groundwater! Be sure to properly dispose of food waste, and use cleaning supplies in moderation
  - Explore options to switch to a municipal sewer system
- **Know if you are in a floodplain!**
  - Flood maps show a community's flood risk
  - These maps help mortgage lenders determine insurance requirements and help communities develop strategies for reducing their risk
  - If you are in a floodplain zone, your property is more susceptible to floods
  - Consider utilizing green infrastructure to mitigate flooding such as a rain garden
- **Maintain wetlands on your property!**
  - Do not dredge or fill wetlands on your private property as these are important animal habitats, particularly for migratory bird species and amphibians
- **Advocate for Wetlands!**
  - Indiana has lost 85% of its historic wetlands
  - Wetland protections are more important now due to this significant loss of these precious ecosystems
  - Share this information with your neighbors and friends

**Did you Know?**  
In May 2023, the US Supreme Court ruled that wetlands protected under the federal Clean Water Act are those with "a continuous surface connection" to navigable waters, so most wetlands will not qualify for federal protection going forward



## What Does Save the Dunes Do?

- Our vision is that the Indiana dunes, Lake Michigan, and surrounding natural areas are protected in perpetuity while achieving a sustainable balance between nature and the human-made environment. We envision a region of environmental stewards who celebrate and protect our areas' natural assets for current and future generations
- Our organization advocates for stronger wetland regulations at both the state and federal level, and we work with many non - profit organizations to bring a strategic approach to our legislative agenda. We also secure grant funding to restore wetlands across Northwest Indiana
- Learn more about our work and all our free resources at [savedunes.org/advocacyresources](https://savedunes.org/advocacyresources)

