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### How you can help

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) has always looked to citizens to lead the fight for wetlands protection. The heart of TRCP's grassroots efforts is the We Are Wetlands Campaign and its commitment to identify and empower hunters and anglers, conservationists, clean water advocates, youth and civic leaders, and individual citizens across the country to work for wetlands protection. By signing the We Are Wetlands petition, you can help protect critical fish and wildlife habitat, clean drinking water sources, adequate flood control, and outdoor recreation opportunities.

### What you can do

**SIGN THE PETITION!** – and get 24 of your friends to do the same. Then send it to TRCP at the address below. We'll make sure that the names are added to the national list of signatures so your voice can be heard. If you need more copies of the petition to send to friends and family, either make a copy yourself or send an email to TRCP at [wetlands@trcp.org](mailto:wetlands@trcp.org) and we will send you more.

Other groups you may want to recruit in this effort include:

- Hunting and Fishing Clubs
- Outdoor Recreation Businesses
- Conservation Groups
- Civic Associations or Community Centers
- Local Schools or Youth Sports Clubs
- Retirement Centers



### Mail Petition to:

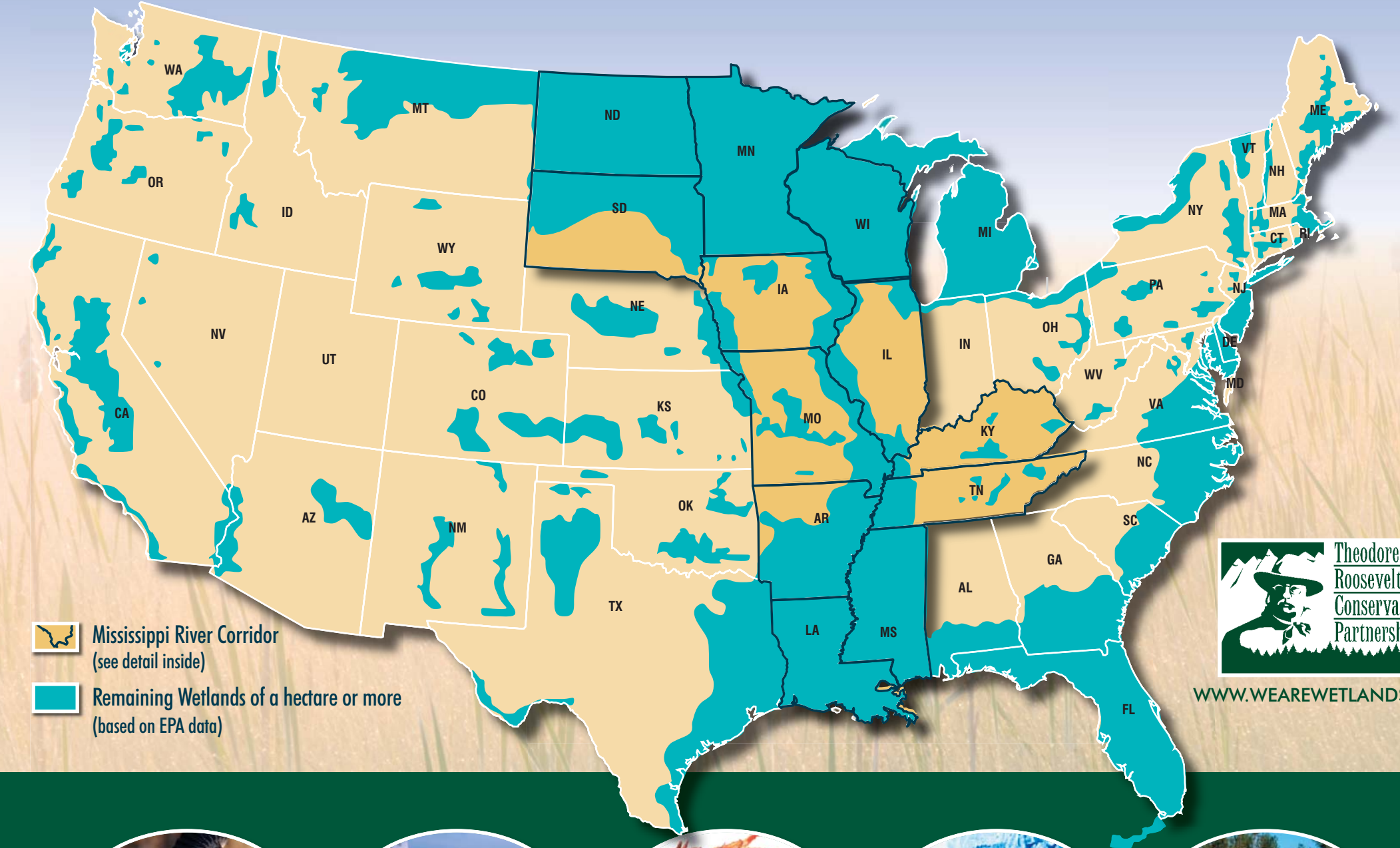
The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership  
 Attn: We Are Wetlands Campaign  
 555 11th St., N.W., 6th Floor  
 Washington, DC 20004



[WWW.WEAREWETLANDS.ORG](http://WWW.WEAREWETLANDS.ORG)

# We are WETLANDS

## REMAINING WETLANDS IN THE CONTINENTAL U.S.



[WWW.WEAREWETLANDS.ORG](http://WWW.WEAREWETLANDS.ORG)



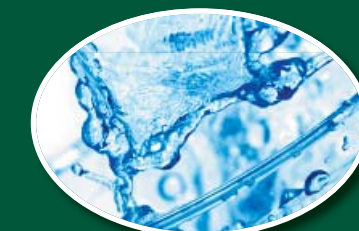
We hunt 'em



We fish 'em



We eat 'em



We drink 'em



We need 'em

# We are WETLANDS



# Help protect WETLANDS

## America's wetlands are slipping through our hands

The United States loses about 80,000 total acres of our natural wetlands each year, despite the fact that they give us a great range of benefits. These benefits span the stuff of life: clean drinking water, ground water recharge, nurseries for all stripes of fish, millions of new ducks and pheasants, and jobs for fishermen. Yet, by abiding a series of poor legal decisions and federal rulemakings, we allow the trend to continue, even accelerate.

**We must immediately restore our national wetlands protection priorities. By joining the TRCP We Are Wetlands campaign, you can help apply pressure where it is needed most.**

## What are wetlands?

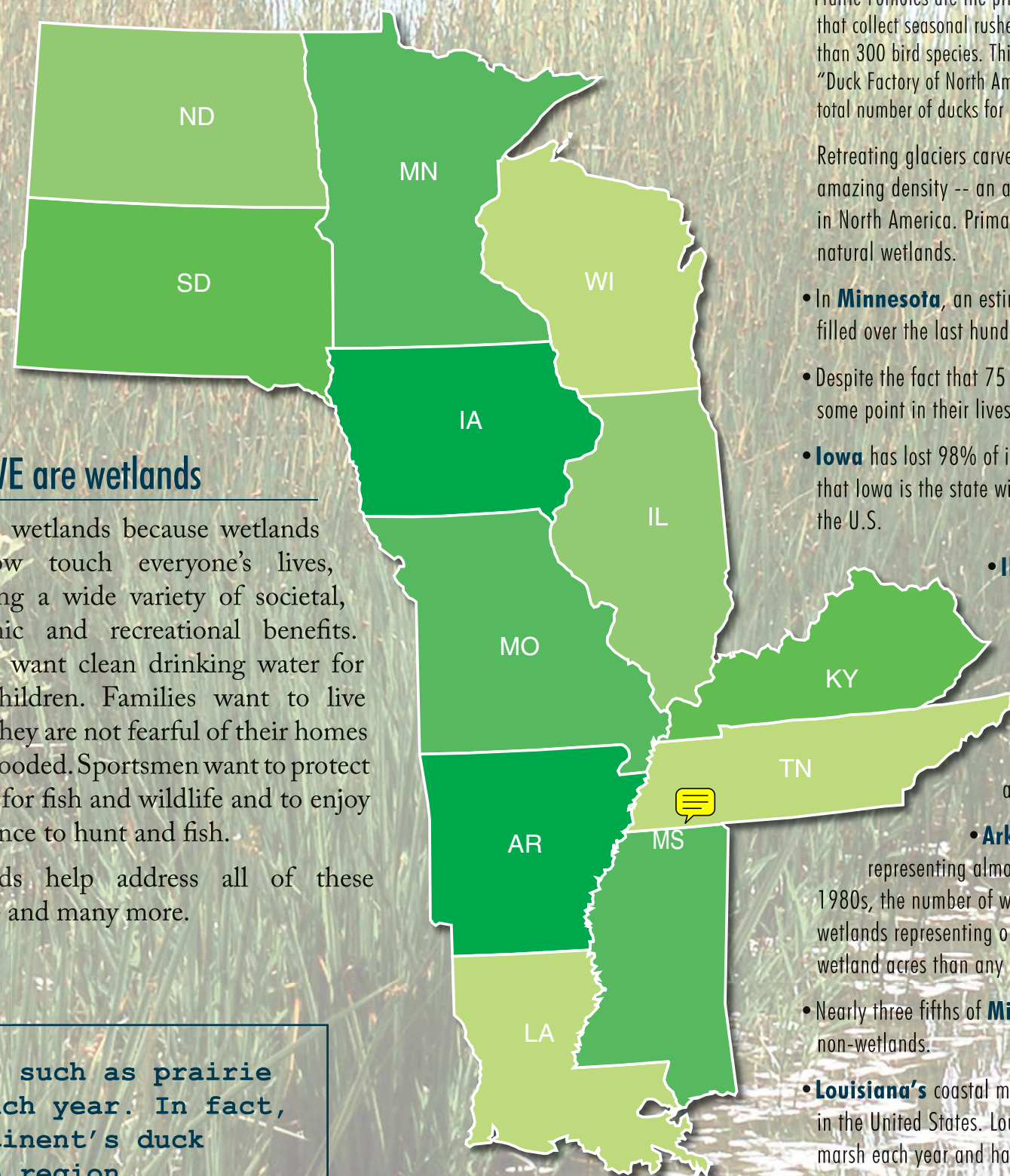
Wetlands are the connections between water and land. They can be wet year-round, but often only are seasonally moist. Wetlands include the things we call:

- marshes
- swamps
- bogs
- fens
- playas
- prairie potholes
- vernal pools, and
- intermittent and ephemeral streams.

**However we choose to refer to them, a truth holds: wetlands are among the most productive and fertile ecosystems in the world.**

**Five to 7 million waterfowl use wetlands, such as prairie potholes, as resting and feeding areas each year. In fact, an estimated 50 to 70 percent of our continent's duck population depends on the prairie pothole region.**

## MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND PRAIRIE POTHOLE REGIONS



## Why WE are wetlands

We are wetlands because wetlands somehow touch everyone's lives, providing a wide variety of societal, economic and recreational benefits. Parents want clean drinking water for their children. Families want to live where they are not fearful of their homes being flooded. Sportsmen want to protect habitat for fish and wildlife and to enjoy the chance to hunt and fish.

Wetlands help address all of these needs – and many more.

## A few facts:

- **Prairie Potholes** are the primary wetland type in the **Dakotas**. Large, round depressions that collect seasonal rushes of rainwater, prairie potholes are vital to the survival of more than 300 bird species. This region is so important to waterfowl that it is often called the "Duck Factory of North America." It is annually responsible for producing 50 percent of the total number of ducks for eight of the 12 most common species that breed there.  
Retreating glaciers carved out nearly 25 million prairie pothole wetlands. This amazing density -- an average of 83 potholes per square acre -- is unparalleled in North America. Primarily to agriculture, North Dakota has lost half of its natural wetlands.
- In **Minnesota**, an estimated 11 million acres of wetlands have been drained or filled over the last hundred years, leaving about 10 million acres.
- Despite the fact that 75 percent of **Wisconsin's** wildlife species use wetlands at some point in their lives, half of the state's wetlands have been lost.
- **Iowa** has lost 98% of its prairie potholes. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service estimates that Iowa is the state with the third highest percentage of overall wetland losses in the U.S.
- **Illinois** has lost nearly 90% of its original wetlands base.
- **Missouri** has lost nearly 90% of its original 4.5 million acres of wetlands.  
• More than half of the wetlands originally found within **Kentucky** and **Tennessee** have been lost. Predominantly bottomland hardwood forest, these wetlands are essential for flood control and species diversity.
- **Arkansas** originally had almost 10 million acres of wetlands, representing almost 30% of the total surface area of the state. By the mid 1980s, the number of wetlands had dropped to 2.8 million acres, a 72% loss, with wetlands representing only 8% of the state's surface area. Arkansas has lost more wetland acres than any other inland state in the nation.
- Nearly three fifths of **Mississippi's** original wetlands have been converted to non-wetlands.
- **Louisiana's** coastal marshes represent as much as 40 % of the coastal marshes in the United States. Louisiana loses an average of 25-30 square miles of coastal marsh each year and has lost nearly 1 million acres of coastal marsh since 1956.

## Why sign our petition?

More than half of the estimated 221 million acres of wetlands originally present in the United States have been lost. In 1972, the passage of the Clean Water Act played an important role in slowing the rate of wetland loss. Even with this layer of protection, nationwide losses of wetlands most important to fish and wildlife continue to exceed 80,000 acres per year. Since 1986, America has lost more than 2 million acres of vegetated wetlands and 1.4 million acres of freshwater marshes.

Wetlands are now more vulnerable than ever due to Supreme Court decisions in recent years that have redefined wetlands and other waters and stripped the federal government of its authority through the Clean Water Act to adequately protect this fragile resource. In 2001 the Court eliminated isolated wetlands from these protections. Then in 2006, weakened the Clean Water Act even further by removing protections for intermittent and ephemeral streams.

As a result, it is now easier for wetlands and other waters to be polluted, drained, filled in and paved over.

**About 9 of every 10 fish caught by American recreational anglers are tied to wetlands, as they provide shelter, food supply, spawning and nursery grounds for numerous aquatic species.**

[WWW.WEAREWETLANDS.ORG](http://WWW.WEAREWETLANDS.ORG)

Dear Mr./Madam President:

Wetlands profoundly benefit the lives of every American. They control floods and erosion, hold and cleanse water, and give us places to hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors. What's more, wetlands provide habitat for many thousands of plant, fish and wildlife species. Yet we continue to let our last – and best – wetlands slip through our hands. A series of recent, ill-advised rollbacks in legal protections have accelerated our nation's already embarrassing rate of wetlands loss. We're currently losing an average of 80,000 acres of natural wetlands each year. This is unacceptable by any measure. Please do everything in your power to restore the strength of our national wetlands protections – and please do so quickly.

Sincerely,

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