

Department of the Interior Presentation to
The Ninth INTECOL Conference



Fifth Report to Congress on the Status and Trends of Wetlands of the United States 2004-2009

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National Reports Wetlands Status and Trends

1950s to 1970s

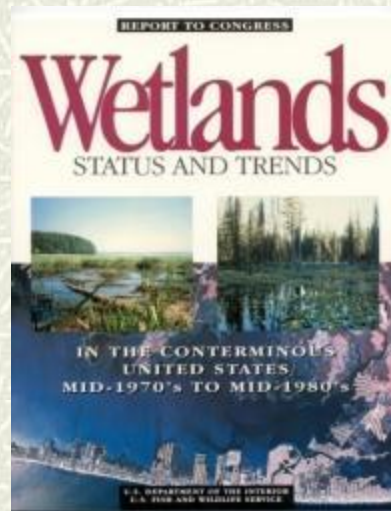
1970s to 1980s

1986 to 1997

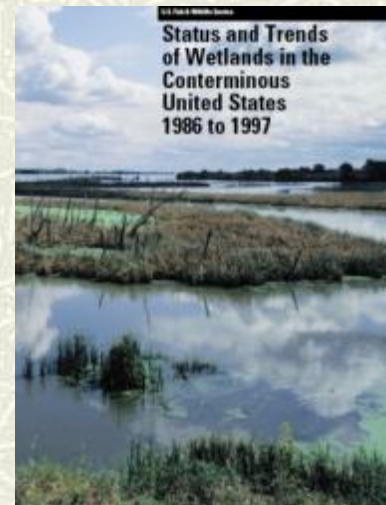
1998 to 2004



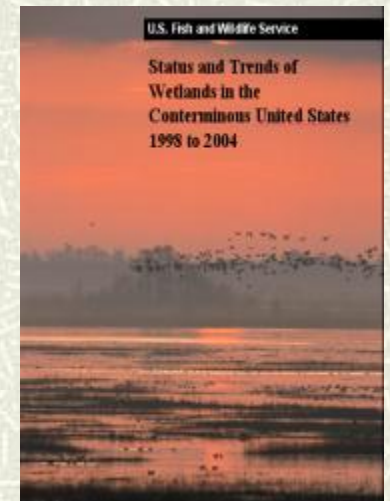
-458K



-290K



-58.5K



+32K

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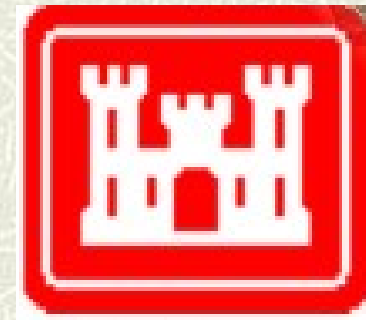
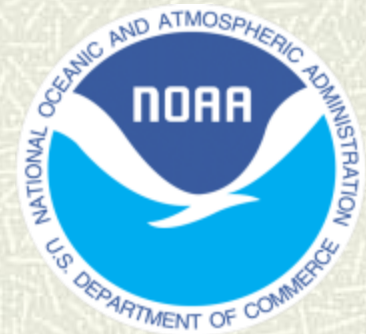
2009 Report is the Fifth Report to Congress

- The Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986 requires the Secretary of the Interior through the FWS to report to Congress on the status and trends of wetlands every 10 years.
- This report culminates 50+ years of wetlands monitoring by FWS.
- Estimated 110.1 million acres of wetlands in the lower 48 States in 2009
 - ✓ - 5.8 million acres of marine/estuarine wetlands (5% of total)
 - ✓ - 104.3 million acres of freshwater wetlands (95%)

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Federal Interagency Collaboration



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Key Study Elements

- **Scientific approach - biological**
- **not regulatory wetland definition**
- **Monitor all wetlands - gain and loss of wetland acreage by type**
- **Statistical estimates – with published standard error rates**
- **Process is transparent and peer reviewed**
- **Consistent measurable results to gauge policy decisions**



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Sample Analysis:

- **5,042 sample plots (4 sq. mi. each)**
- **Field verification for 18% of plots**
- **Verification sites in 42 states**

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Saltwater Wetlands

- Saltwater wetlands declined by an estimated 84,100 acres (1.4%)
- Most losses of salt marsh wetland → deepwater bay bottoms or open-ocean (83%)
- There is evidence of marsh migration inland into undeveloped uplands.
- Atlantic Coast and Gulf of Mexico
 - ✓ Losses of salt marsh and changes in non-vegetated wetlands resulted from coastal storms and relative sea level rise

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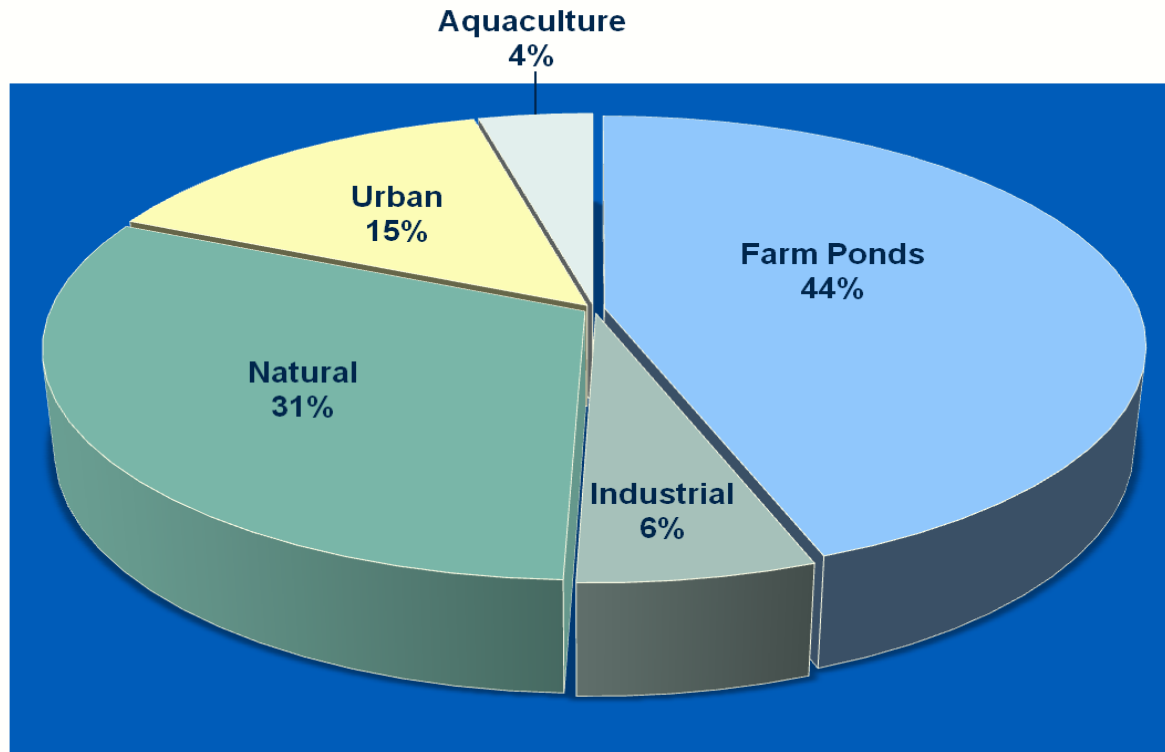
Freshwater Wetlands

- Overall, freshwater wetlands increased slightly, but...
 - ✓ - *Forested wetlands sustained their largest losses since the 1974 to 1985 time period (633,100 acres)*
- Freshwater ponds have continued to increase but at a slower rate (3.2% increase in area)
- Freshwater vegetated wetlands continued to decline at a reduced rate (50+% fewer acres lost)

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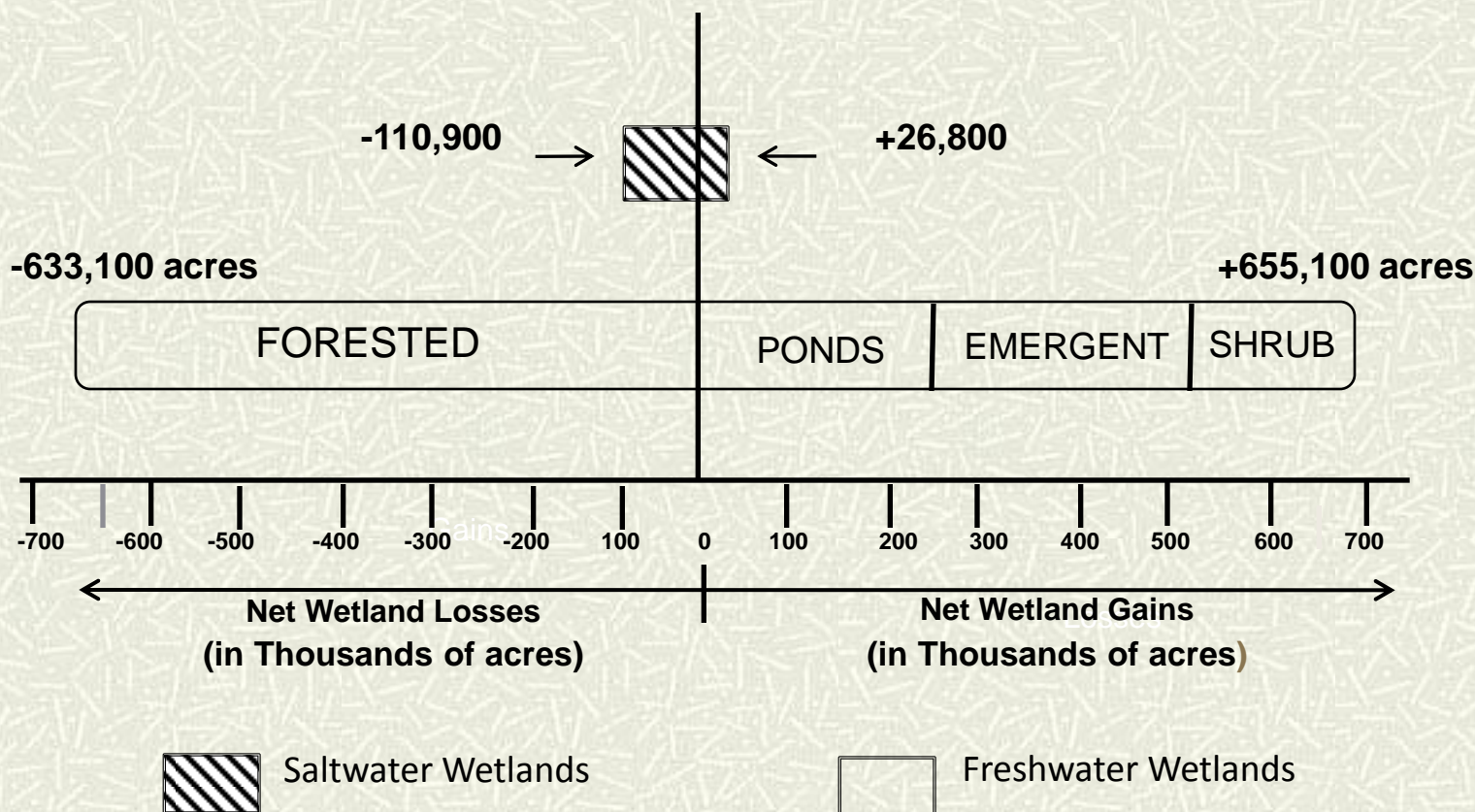
***Freshwater Pond Types (2009)
represent 6% of all wetlands***



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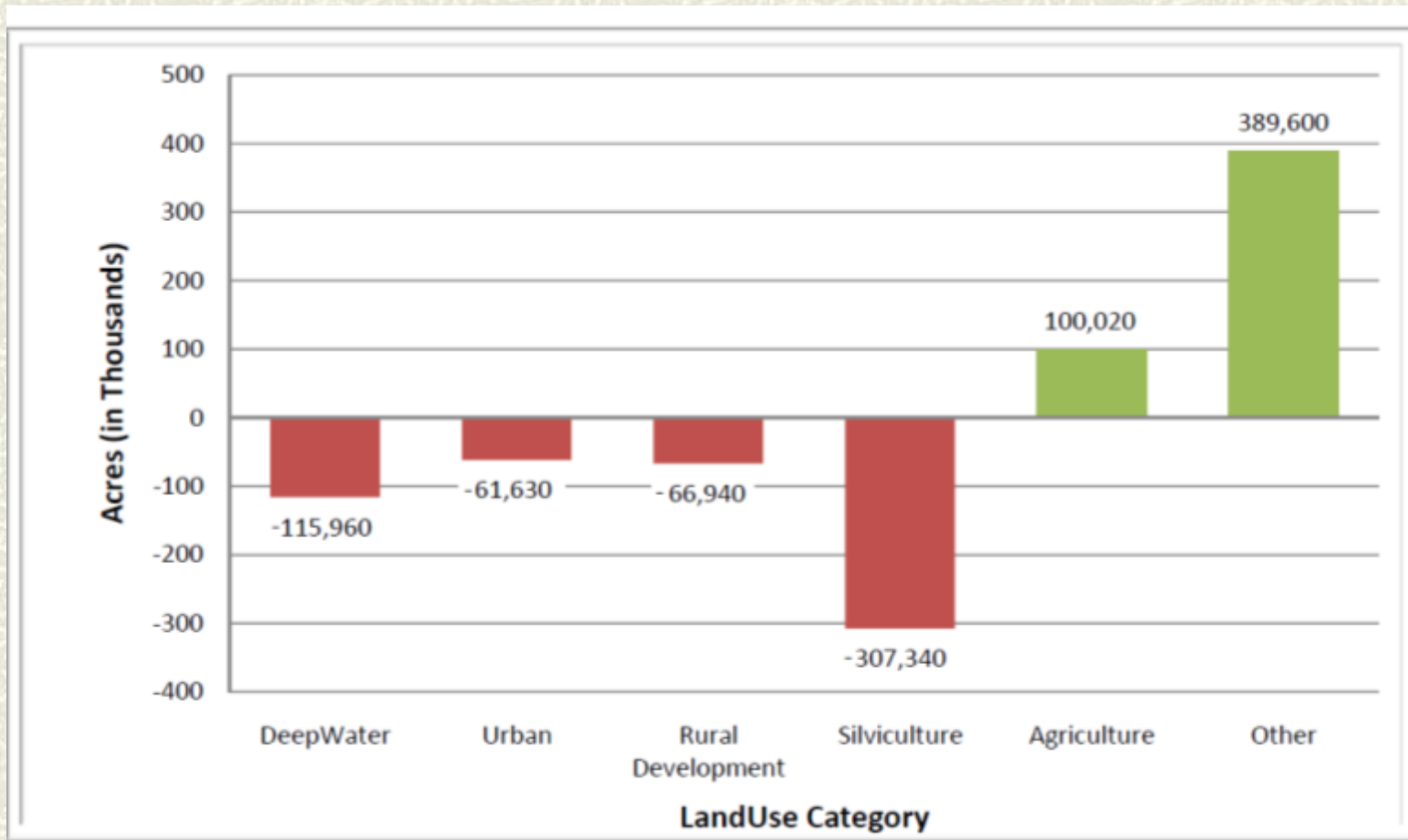
Gains and Losses of Saltwater and Freshwater Wetlands



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Net gains and losses of wetland (salt and freshwater)



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Summary

- 50+ years of monitoring wetland trends
- Over this period, total losses exceeded gains
- Freshwater wetland losses *and* gains are large
- Wetlands face multiple stressors, notably
 - ✓ human development
 - ✓ changes associated with changing climate
- USEPA National Wetland Condition Assessment to follow
- Can losses be reduced?

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Working with our Partners to Conserve Wetlands



Everglades Headwaters Conservation Partnership

June 6, 2012 Orlando, FL



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