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The Wetland Frontier: A Vanishing Resource

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Wetlands provide a very integrated and vital part of our environment. A wetland can provide a clean source of water for man, refuge for animals, recreation, flood control, erosion control, and many other benefits. Despite these positive attributes, America’s wetlands have been steadily declining over the years, and it has been only in the last few decades or so that man has started to come to the conclusion that a wetland is a valuable resource and needs to be protected.

Today man continues to destroy wetlands in his insatiable appetite for bigger homes located in suburbia far away from the urban areas. The effect of one such project, Twin Eagles in NW Allen County, Indiana, was examined. The developers plan on converting 309 acres of rolling farm ground, bottomland woods, and lotic marshes into a housing tract comprising 411 building sites of varying sizes. This development, if approved, will impact Allen County in a minimum of three ways:

i. Esthetically, the natural wonders of the site will disappear into another maze of roads and homesteads.

ii. Ecologically, the natural wetlands, bottomland woods, and rolling landscape will be forever changed, altered, or destroyed.

iii. Financially, the county will reap a windfall of increased tax revenues from the improved home sites.