

PLANNING FOR A POND OR A WETLAND?

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This document is intended to provide general convenient information with associated references.
It is not exhaustive or intended to be prescriptive.

Pond vs Wetland at a Glance

- **Pond**
 - Depth: average of 4 - 8 ft and a maximum of 15 ft
 - Bank slope: 2 horizontal lengths to 1 vertical height (steep)
 - Vegetation: less than 30% emergent plant cover and little to no wet meadow or floating aquatic vegetation
 - Wildlife: fish, birds, and mammals
- **Wetland**
 - Depth: average of 2 ft and a maximum of 8 ft
 - Bank slope: 6 (or higher) horizontal lengths to 1 vertical height (shallow)
 - Vegetation: more than 30% of emergent plant cover and more abundant wet meadows and floating aquatic vegetation
 - Wildlife: amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals

Visuals for Comparison

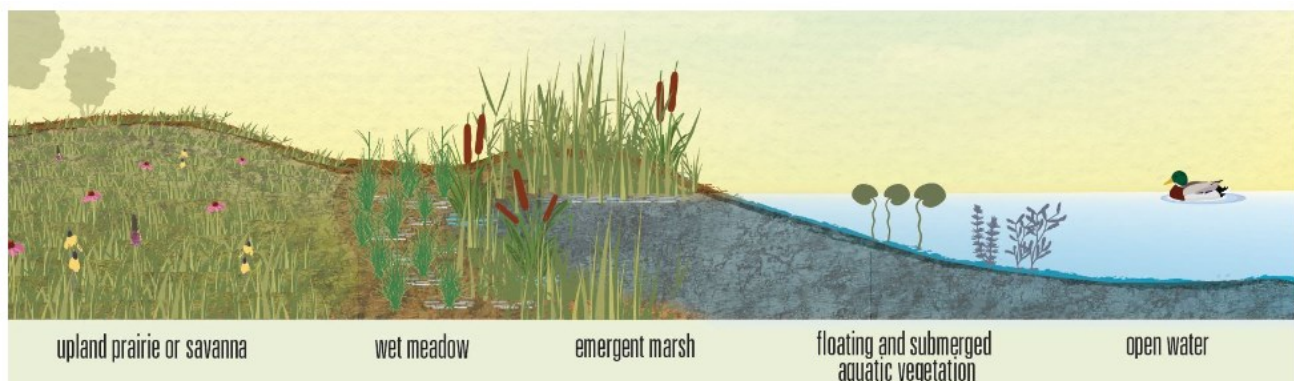
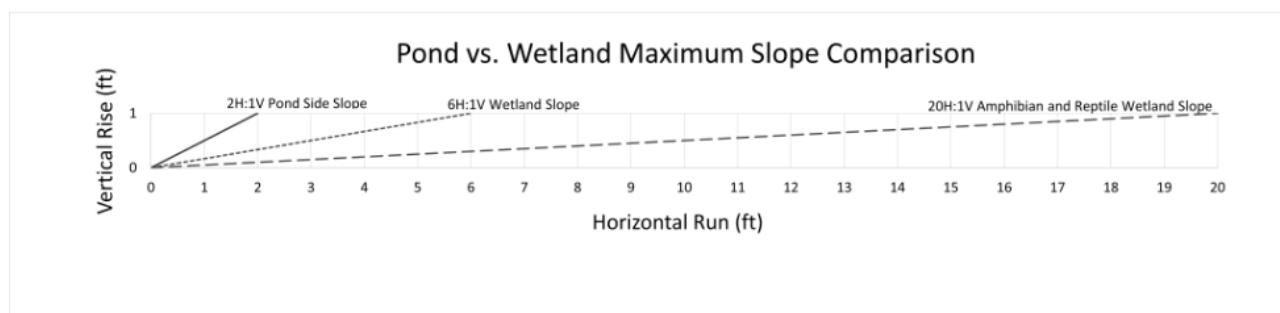




Photo by Holly Mandarich/Unsplash

Photo Examples



Ponds

Wetlands



References

Richardson et al. (2022) A functional definition to distinguish ponds from lakes and wetlands. Scientific Reports, 12, 10472. <https://nature.com/articles>

Stefanik, K. (2023). Is that a pond or a wetland? How to tell ponds and wetlands apart and why the correct name matters. <https://iowalearningfarms.wordpress.com>

USDA NRCS. (2008) National Engineering Handbook (Title 210), Part 650, Chapter 13, Wetland Restoration, Enhancement, or Creation. Washington, D.C. <https://directives.sc.egov.usda.gov>