Cypress ponds, familiar to Coastal Plain residents, also occur, as do pine flatwoods. These wetlands are often attendant to our many streams and ponds, as well as to the Canoochee and Ogeechee Rivers.

Hunter Army Airfield, a Fort Stewart satellite facility in Savannah, also features tidal marshlands. A limited range of plants and animals can survive the regular influx of salt water in tidal marshlands; this makes them a particularly delicate type of wetland, protected in Georgia by state law.

How does Fort Stewart manage its wetlands?

Fort Stewart's Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division employs environmental managers and consultants who review proposed construction and training activities for environmental impacts of all types, including impacts to wetlands. Areas are surveyed for the presence of wetlands, and the boundaries of wetland areas located based on hydrology, plant community, and soil type. Using modern Geographic Information System (GIS) and design technology, most projects are sited and planned to avoid wetlands entirely. When impacts are unavoidable, a permit application for the project will be submitted to the USACE for review. Fort Stewart has traditionally handled its own mitigation, restoring large wetland areas on the installation.

As the largest Army base east of the Mississippi, Fort Stewart land has seen a lot of use. However, thanks to sensibly applied environmental legislation, as well as the efforts of DPW staff and state and federal agencies, Fort Stewart remains a sustainable training and deployment platform, as well as a thriving wildlife reservation.

ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION DPW

Questions about Fort Stewart Environmental?
Call our office at 571-801-0241

How does Fort Stewart manage its wetlands?

Wetlands are those places where land and water meet to create some of the planet's most diverse and productive ecosystems. They are characterized by a high water table, generally creating the formation of soils rich in organic matter, and colonization by life forms which prefer moist environments.

Why are they important?
Wetlands play many roles in our ecosystem.

Habitat for wildlife Wetlands are obviously a home for aquatic and semi-aquatic species such as fish, amphibians, turtles, alligators, otters, crayfish, and many types of birds. Other animals may use them temporarily as feeding or breeding ground, or for cooling off in warm weather.
Plant life is also typically abundant in the moist and fertile wetland environment. Some familiar local wetland plants are cypress, blueberry, sweetgum, cattail, and the carnivorous hooded pitcher plant.

Water supply Connected to streams and rivers, wetlands are part of the surface and subsurface transmission of the same water which ultimately finds its way to your faucet at home. Sediments, plants, and microorganisms help to remove pollutants from the water.
Flood control Wetlands receive and store water during storm and flood periods, and also dampen the energy of wind and tidal surges.

How are wetlands protected?

The Federal Clean Water Act of 1972 is the main legal driver for protection of wetlands and other bodies of water. The US Army Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction over Waters of the US, including wetlands, and a permit from the USACE is generally needed to fill or otherwise alter wetlands. Although most permits are granted, wetlands loss in the US is decreasing, thanks to policies requiring mitigation, the actual or virtual replacement of lost wetland areas. Many states, including Georgia, pass legislation at their own level further protecting wetlands from unrestricted development.

What are wetlands like on Fort Stewart?

Roughly 1/3 of Fort Stewart's 280,000 acres is wetlands. Most are of the bottomland hardwood type, with mixed vegetation and only occasional flooding.