

Urban ecosystem services: pp. 219-239 (4.4, 4.5)

Both human-caused factors and natural factors can cause the destruction of wetlands. Where do you think wetland conservation and management efforts should be focused?

What are some of the indirect impacts of using wetlands as water treatment sites? Do you think that the benefits outweigh the costs?

Section 4.4.5 provides 10 key areas that need to be further researched, or that are 'deserving of future attention'. Is there any one that you feel is particularly deserving of our attention? Do you think that area will be one of the easier or more difficult ones to tackle?

While we know there are numerous ecological reasons it is critical to have proper water conservation and management practices, it seemed that human health was a reoccurring concern for this section. Do you think it should be the primary focus?

Section 4.5 discusses green infrastructure planning and smart growth theory at length as a means of combating urban sprawl. Considering the arguments for various strengths and weaknesses for both, do you feel one is a better tactic than the other? Are you convinced that either are a great solution? If not, what would you suggest to combat urban sprawl?

"Semi-natural ecosystems have until recently been regarded as having little ecological value by ecologists, and have therefore been largely ignored in ecological inventories." How do you feel about this statement? Which semi-natural ecosystems do you think are most important, and what are possible consequences of neglecting them?

The concluding remarks for 4.5 suggest that further studies are needed to assess whether the environmental benefits of planning compact cities outweigh those of dispersed settlement growth. Based on the reading, what do you think?