

Public attitudes and values for wetland conservation in New South Wales, Australia

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This study, modeled after a study conducted in the New England region of the United States, estimates a willingness-to-pay value and examines attitudes about wetland conservation in New South Wales, Australia. Respondents to a questionnaire survey indicated a median willingness-to-pay of A\$100 (A\$=Australian dollars) (upper QUARTILE=A\$150, lower QUARTILE=A\$50) per household per year for 5 years and a mean of A\$124.37 (95%CI=A\$107.49–141.24). A conservative estimate of the aggregate value of wetlands in New South Wales, based on willingness-to-pay values reported by respondents and assuming that non-respondents are not willing to pay for wetland conservation, is A\$38 million per year for the next 5 years. In absolute terms, willingness-to-pay in New South Wales was somewhat lower than that of New England, but when compared as a fraction of the gross domestic product for Australia and the United States, willingness-to-pay was slightly higher in New South Wales. Over 90% of respondents considered the intrinsic value of wetlands and the importance of conserving wetlands for future generations when answering questions about willingness-to-pay.

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