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Mrs. Smart

Environmental Science-P.2

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How Might Climate Affect the Louisiana Wetlands Summary

Climate can possibly affect the Louisiana wetlands, because of water levels rising, which causes more saltwater intrusion. When saltwater intrudes in any freshwater swamp where the plants thrive in freshwater, most of those plants are going to die or not grow. The less plants there are in wetlands affects the animals and marine life that uses wetlands for nurseries, food, shelter, and a habitat. When the animals die of or go search for other wetlands to live in people who live off of those animals can not make a living anymore.

The two labs we did in class, ice melting and saltwater intrusion, helped me make these conclusions. When the ice in the water melted faster than the ice on sticks, which represented the ice on land, and made the water levels rise faster also I concluded that the more ocean water rises, the more saltwater intrudes into the freshwater wetlands. This saltwater intrusion is bad for the plants because in the lab for saltwater intrusion, the plants that were watered with more salty water died sooner or did not grow much at all. This lead me to believe that when the saltwater from the ocean comes into the wetlands the plants would most likely die off leaving less vegetation for animals to use for food, shelter, and habitat. These are the conclusions that were made from the two labs on how climate change can affect the Louisiana wetlands.

How Might Climate Change Affect Louisiana Wetlands

How might climate change affect the Louisiana wetlands? By knowing how climate changes might result in the loss of our wetlands we may be able to prevent losing them completely. To find out what does endanger Louisiana wetlands some labs were done. Hopefully, these labs can help answer the question and also prevent the loss of Louisiana wetlands.

In class we did a few experiments that helped us, they were the grass experiment and the ice and water experiment. For the grass experiment we took some grass seeds and placed them into soil and on a paper towel in a bowl covered with some plastic wrap over them. Each table also watered their grass with different water salinity to see which water the grass grew best in. In the ice and water experiment we had two containers and put the same amount of water in each, then we put ice in one container and put ice on top of some wooden sticks that was on top the other container. This experiment was done to see if ice melted quicker in water or out of it, representing floating ice in cold bodies of water and glaciers out of water.

In the grass experiment, the grass grew best in the freshwater and the more salty the water was that watered the grass, the worse the grass grew until it died. In the ice and water experiment, the container with the ice in the water melted more quickly and the water level rose too. In the other container the ice melted more slowly and therefore the water level rose slowly too.

Since the grasses that were watered with more salinity died or grew poorly this means that the freshwater plants in Louisiana wetlands start to die also with saltwater invasion. Since the water levels also rise as more ice melts then there is a higher risk of more saltwater mixing with the freshwater and killing more plants in the Louisiana wetlands. The less plants we have growing in Louisiana wetlands, the less places young animals and fish have to hide and use as nurseries, higher chances of flooding, less habitat for species to live. The more species that die or find other habitats also affects Louisiana people, because we live off of the marine life and sell it. People can also lose their jobs if there is no

fish or other marine life to catch.

Yes, climate change can affect Louisiana wetlands based on water levels rising and salt water intrusion, which leads to other problems for the animals and people that depend on the wetlands to survive.

Project video:

http://youtu.be/RNdr7LT6Ask

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