



Dave Windsor's 'Alaska Real Estate'

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Wet Is Not Worthless

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Wet land may be worth less than dry land but it is not worthless. You may have a sodden parcel of property that is difficult to develop but you would be surprised at how much former wet land is now a buzzing part of our metropolis. Even the RE/MAX building here in mid-town was formerly Blueberry Lake!

A lot of Anchorage was formerly wet land, or the more definitive "Wetlands" - i.e. areas mapped and controlled by the Corps of Engineers. If you have land for sale and it is "Wetlands" any disturbance of the property, such as construction, does require a permit from the Corps. With a legitimate development plan the Corps is usually amenable to such permits.

If your lot or parcel is not designated "Wetlands" but simply wet land (people walking on it in summer get their sneakers wet) it is still quite buildable. Even the odd house in some prestigious

subdivisions is built on pilings.

Many Spinnell and other subdivisions are built on wet land. Sometimes the Municipality requires soils to be exchanged before you build and this is quite expensive. Sometimes the subdivision, like Clipperwood, has a virtual dyke around it for drainage. Drain tile, or french drains, around the house may solve the problem, not to mention the hundreds of homes that have sump pumps in the crawl space.

One has to remember that Alaska has more surface water on it than any place in the world and, naturally, unbelievable amounts of sub-surface water. Builders have become quite brilliant at mitigating not only earthquake risks in Alaska but also moisture risks.

Wet land may be worth less when you want to sell it but is by no means worthless. Given the near extinction of the vacant land species in

Anchorage, any land is an excellent investment.

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