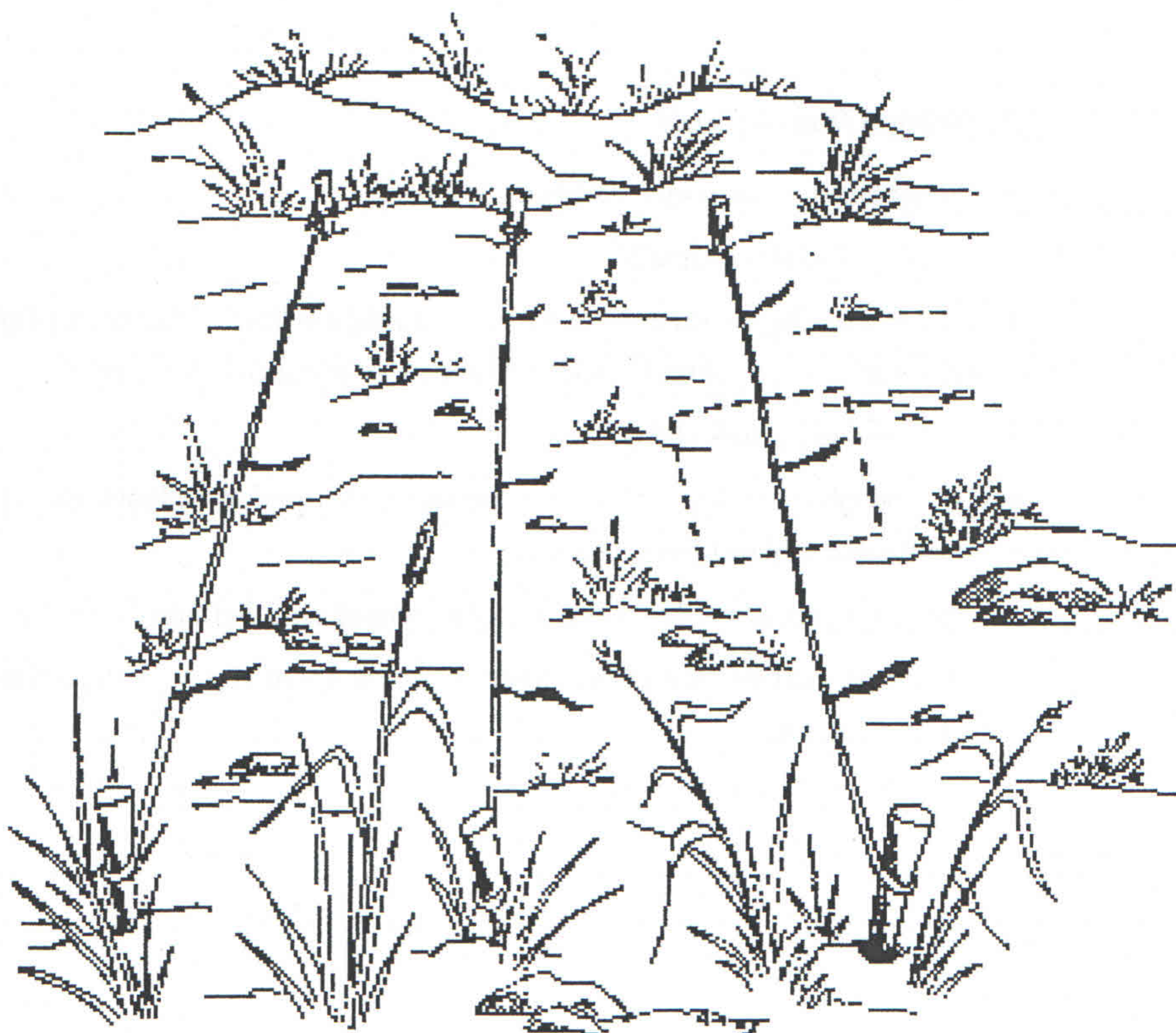


## Activity 1: Plant Inventory

- Tasks**
- 1) Set up a plant transect \*;
  - 2) Identify as many different types of vegetation as possible in the wetland and
  - 3) Compare upland and wetland species by observing differences in their structure.
- \* *A transect is a method used to evaluate the landscape of a natural area by recording observations at regular intervals along a straight line and using that information to produce a base map of the site.*

**Materials** Paper, pencils, clipboards, twine, wooden stakes, flagging tape, measuring tape, plant field guides (see the *Appendix*), measuring tape, copies of plant illustrations from Chapter II.



*plant transect*

- Procedure**
1. Begin by setting up a transect. Use the twine and stakes to run a straight line across the wetland. Make sure the line crosses all representative zones of the wetland – from boundaries with upland areas to the edges of standing or running water (avoid running it *through* water). If your wetland is very small (less than half an acre), you can make several transects.
  2. Mark off intervals on the twine every 10 to 15 feet with flagging tape. Stick to whatever interval you choose, even if there is a tree at the spot. Give each flagged station a number.

3. At each station, one student in the group should be designated the *measurer*. This person will stand over the flag and stretch his/her arms out wide, both parallel and perpendicular to the line. This distance is the dimension of the study area at each station.
4. Designate someone as a *data keeper* who will record the following information for each station:
  - 1) kinds of living plants;
  - 2) approximate plant heights (using measuring tape); and
  - 3) the number of each plant type.
5. Answer the *Making Observations* questions below for each station, if time allows.
6. Designate a person in your group to sketch a profile of each station.
7. Draw and/or photograph at least two plants per station.

### ***Making Observations***

- Are wetland plant roots visible?
- Are plants alive or dead?
- Is there anything unusual at the station that might influence the kinds of plants growing there – a wind-thrown tree, a large boulder, hummocky ground surface, etc.?
- Are there any unusual smells?
- Can you observe any differences between the wetland plants and upland species? Can you identify any upland plants or trees?
- Which species are able to live in both upland and wetland habitats?
- Is there any difference in the diversity of plants in the upland habitat compared to the wetland habitat?

