

**WETLANDS DEMYSTIFIED**  
**The Connecticut Natural Diversity Data Base**  
**By Paul Hennen**

In our March 1 article published in the *Pomfret Times* I discussed some of the more important changes made to our wetlands permit application form. This new form is now on our website. To most of our readers these changes will be of little importance unless, of course, you are thinking about a project that may need a wetlands permit. If you are such a person then one of the requirements we added may be of importance to you. This new requirement is for the applicant to review the Connecticut Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) map. This article will address why there is a need for such a review and how to go about doing it.

Connecticut law dictates that no one may threaten the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species. The NDDDB provides information on the biology, population status and threats to these populations and has generated municipal maps identifying locations where these species have been observed. The data base now contains more than one thousand (1000) species of plants and animals, including invertebrates, and 45 or more significant natural communities, which are defined as habitats of limited distribution in Connecticut or New England or that provide habitat for state listed species or species of conservation concern. It would certainly be beyond the scope of this article to address the Connecticut Endangered Species Act and all of its ramifications. However, many species covered by the Act are associated with wetlands and watercourses and that is why we as a Wetlands Agency are involved. The NDDDB generated municipal maps include not only wetland and watercourse areas where these species are reported to exist but also significant natural communities as well.

As of December 2005 there were some thirteen (13) shaded areas shown on the State and Federal Listed Species and Significant Natural Communities map specific for the Town of Pomfret. These shaded areas measure one half (1/2) mile in diameter and represent a buffered zone around the known species or community location. Because these sites have been buffered, listed species and significant communities will generally occupy only a portion of the land represented as a shaded area on the map. The current map shows these areas in the following general locations: along Bark Meadow Brook south of Route 44, along Wrights Crossing Road south of its intersection with Tyrone Road, an area south of Day Road along Route 169, another in the Braytons Pond area south of Route 44 and west of Wolf Den Drive, several areas along Wolf Den Drive before it intersects with Wolf Den Road, an area along Jericho Road in the vicinity of Baker Pond, and finally an area south of Route 44 in the area known as Maple Swamp in the vicinity of Paine Road and Drown Road. Some of these areas may overlap each other. These shaded areas represent a buffered zone around the known species or community location. The exact

location of the species or community fall somewhere within the shaded area, not necessarily in the center.

As part of completing an IWWA application, you must review this map, which is available on-line at [www.dep.state.ct.us/cgnhs/nddbpdfs.asp](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/cgnhs/nddbpdfs.asp). You may also contact our clerk at Town Hall if you need assistance in obtaining the map. If your activity is within a shaded area or overlaps a lake, pond or wetland that has any shading; or is upstream or downstream (by less than ½ mile) from a shaded area, the activity may have a potential conflict with a listed species or significant natural community. Should this be the case you must complete a Data Base Request form requesting a NDDDB review of your proposed activity to determine if the threatened or endangered species or communities would be adversely impacted. The request for the review should be submitted to the NDDDB Program with a project description and a map (1:24,000 USGS quadrangle map) clearly showing the project boundaries. Note that the DEP review may take four to six weeks to complete. Instructions and forms may be obtained from our clerk and are now included in our Wetlands Permit Application packet. Indicate whether your proposed activity requires submission of the NDDDB form on your IWWA application (refer to item number 9).

Keep in mind this review is not a requirement made by us. This is a Connecticut DEP requirement mandated by statute. However our Regulations provide that all such site review or permitting requirements, state or federal, are obtained before we can issue a wetlands permit.

Our next topic is undecided at this point. Perhaps one of our readers would like to suggest one? Send us an e-mail at [www.Betty@pomfretct.org](mailto:www.Betty@pomfretct.org) or call our clerk at 860-974-9135 and we will do our best to address your request.

My thanks to Katarina Rutkowski for her comments on this article.