

Why does Springfield have Wetland Regulations?

The Springfield Zoning Ordinance explains:

Wetlands are extremely important to the Town as they provide area for floodwater storage, wildlife habitat and groundwater recharge.

The regulations are intended to:

- Prevent pollution of surface and groundwater by sewage or toxic substances;
- Maintain the natural flood protection characteristics of wetlands;
- Protect unique, rare and valuable natural areas and wildlife habitat;
- Protect water supplies;
- Encourage low intensity uses that can be harmoniously, appropriately and safely located in wetlands.

What about wetland buffers?

The Zoning Ordinance describes wetland buffers as:

...[A]reas that are designed to remain vegetated in an undisturbed and natural condition to provide and protect habitat and travel corridors for wildlife and to protect adjacent wetlands from upland impacts to water quality.

What about wetlands on my land?

The Springfield Planning Board welcomes public participation in the Wetlands Project. Contact the Town or the UVLSRPC if you have questions.

Want to learn more about the project?

Contacts:

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- or -

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Project Endorsements

The following groups and organizations provided letters in support of this project:

- Springfield Board of Selectmen
- Springfield Conservation Commission
- NH Department of Resources and Economic Development
- New London-Springfield Water Precinct
- Eastman Village District
- Lake Sunapee Protective Association
- Ausbon Sargent Land Preservation Trust

Project Partners



Upper Valley Lake Sunapee
Regional Planning Commission



New Hampshire Housing
Bringing You Home



Springfield Wetlands Project



An Overview of the Springfield Wetlands Project

In early 2013 the Springfield Planning Board applied for a grant to make changes to the town wetland regulations. During the 2013 Town Meeting Town voters supported the receipt and expenditure of the grant awarded for the project. The Springfield Wetlands Project will continue efforts by the Planning Board and a Wetland Committee and make changes to the Town regulations.

Project Goals

- Simplify the wetland regulations; develop regulatory standards that are easy to understand by property owners.
- Ensure a balance between sustaining the town's natural resources and maintaining property owner's reasonable use of their land.
- Have broad public participation throughout the planning process.
- Develop a more accurate town-wide wetland map and integrate it into the permitting process.
- Develop standards for identifying and protecting vernal pools.

Project Timeline

- *Summer 2013* – Develop preliminary wetland maps and identify potential changes to the Town regulations.
- *Fall 2013* – Continue work on the wetland maps and complete first draft amendment language for public review.
- *Winter '13-'14* – Complete the wetland maps, finalize the proposed amendments for vote at the 2014 Town Meeting.

How Will the Wetland Map Change?

The town presently uses a wetland map based on the National Wetland Inventory (below, left). As part of this project a Certified Wetland Scientist who is an expert in town-wide wetland mapping, is using Aerial Photo Interpretation to develop a detailed Town-wide map (below, right).



National Wetlands Inventory Map



Aerial Photo Interpretation Map

Community Input – May 21, 2013 Community Forum

On May 21, 2013 the Springfield Planning Board hosted a community forum about wetlands and wetland regulations. Public comments include:

- A new wetland map is a good idea.
- Landowners should be sent a copy of the map for informational purposes.
- Buffers are important.

- There should be an opportunity for relief for properties affected by wetlands and buffers.
- Regulations need to be reasonable, simple and flexible.
- It is important to educate residents and property owners about wetlands.
- Keep the public informed.