

# Request for Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) State Listed Species Review FAQ

## **Q1. Is there a fee for the NDDDB review?**

A1. No, not at this time.

## **Q2. Where can I find the most recent NDDDB maps?**

A2. PDF maps by town can be found on the DEEP webpage at [www.ct.gov/deep/nddbrequest](http://www.ct.gov/deep/nddbrequest) . Interactive map viewers with the NDDDB data can be found on the CTECO web page [www.cteco.uconn.edu](http://www.cteco.uconn.edu) . GIS data can be downloaded from the DEEP web page [www.ct.gov/deep/gis](http://www.ct.gov/deep/gis) . If you do not have access to a computer, maps can be viewed using computers available in the DEEP Public File Room at 79 Elm Street in Hartford, generally open Tuesday –Thursday. Large format printed maps can be purchased from the DEEP Store, Maps on Demand service (860-424-3555, [deep.store@ct.gov](mailto:deep.store@ct.gov) ). The DEEP Store has transitioned from a “brick and mortar” presence to an online only shopping venue.

## **Q3. How do I know the date of the map?**

A3. The date of the map is printed in the title block on the 8.5 x 11 maps and in the Explanation section of the larger format maps. In the GIS data, refer to the attribute field for the Map Date.

## **Q4. If my project is close to an NDDDB area, but not really touching it, do I have to submit a review?**

A4. If your project does not meet the pre-screening criteria as stated in the instructions, you do not need to submit an NDDDB review. If you are close to, but just outside of an NDDDB shaded area you may still want to submit a review request. If the preferred habitat for a species is documented nearby *and* occurs on your project site, the species may also occur on your site. Getting information early in your planning process and addressing endangered species issues up front can work to your advantage. Ignoring the issue increases the probability that other concerned parties will raise concerns at a later phase when changing plans can be more costly. Being outside of an NDDDB area means that there are no *known* observations of state listed species on your site, however, this does not preclude the possibility of their discovery should on-site surveys be conducted. Consultation with the NDDDB should not be substituted for on-site surveys necessary for a thorough environmental assessment.

## **Q5. How do I fill out the Requester in Part II?**

A5. If you are a private landowner and do not have a company, simply enter your name as the Requester's name.

If you are a consultant, you may choose to enter your own company and name as the Requester, or you may choose to enter your client's name as the requester, and your name as the primary contact, either way is acceptable. If your client will be applying for a DEEP permit, you will want to enter the client's name as the Requester and your own company/name as the primary contact. This will make it easier for the permit analyst to relate the NDDDB request to the permit application.

If you work for a state or federal agency, enter the agency name, e.g. “State of Connecticut, Department of xxxxx” as the Requester Company Name and your name as the Contact Name .

**Q6. In Part V. what do I do if more than one selection applies from Group 1 and Group 2?**

A6. Please check only one box from Group 1, Group 2, or Group 3. Pick the most appropriate category based on the amount of project details available and the desired determination. If you think that more than one category applies, describe both categories in the project description (e.g., This is a land protection project that is using state grant funding).

**Q7. Can I submit a site plan as Attachment B, the detailed site map?**

A7. No, Attachment B, is meant to show detailed site boundaries and the area of work in the context of relevant landmarks that may not be included on site plans. Please see the instructions document for acceptable alternative formats for the required maps.

**Q8. Is the NDDB a comprehensive assessment of state listed species?**

A8. No, the NDDB data is a compilation of observations from various contributors and is not the result of comprehensive state-wide field investigations. Consultation with the NDDB should not be substituted for on-site surveys required for thorough environmental assessments.

**Q9. How long does an NDDB review take?**

A9. An NDDB review can take 4-6 weeks and may require the applicant to produce additional documentation, such as ecological surveys, which must be completed prior to submitting any state permit applications. We recommend that you start this process early and well in advance of any deadlines. You will need an NDDB determination letter that has not expired to include with any DEEP Permit applications.

**Q10. Can I submit my DEEP Permit application while I am waiting for my NDDB response?**

A10. No, if you are in an NDDB Area you must submit with your permit application an NDDB Determination that has not expired or your application will be deemed insufficient and you risk losing your application fee.

**Q11. What is a Safe Harbor Determination?**

A11. The Safe Harbor Determination is an optional alternative review that was developed in conjunction with the revised General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters (2013) and only applies to those seeking this permit type. If approved it provides a three year window for the applicant to conduct the permitted activity during which, as long as the agreed upon conditions are met, the applicant will not be held responsible for any new state listed species discovered after the determination is made. In order to get a Safe Harbor determination, the applicant must provide a detailed and comprehensive analysis of the site. The safe harbor is not effective if a federally listed species is discovered on site.

**Q12. What is a preliminary assessment and what can I do with it?**

A12. Preliminary site assessments are offered as a way to get a general species list for a property. The species list can be used in conjunction with a habitat evaluation for conservation or development planning. Site assessments are **not** an NDDB Determination and cannot be used to fulfill the requirements of a DEEP Permit application.

**Q13. Am I required to conduct field surveys listed in the preliminary assessment letter?**

A13. Read your letter carefully (\*see sample language below). In some cases a habitat evaluation may be sufficient. In some cases you will need a qualified biologist to conduct specific biological field surveys. Ideally field surveys are recommended in order to evaluate potential habitat and species presence and

use of the site. Highly developed sites with little suitable habitat or projects with minimal or temporary impacts may not need surveys. You may be able to develop avoidance or mitigation measures based on your knowledge of the site conditions alone, incorporating into your design measures that preserve and buffer habitat or include habitat improvements and measures to minimize disturbance and pollution.

**Q14. How do I find a qualified biologist?**

A14. DEEP does not keep a list of qualified biologists. You may consult with local universities or botanical and zoological organizations who may be able to recommend knowledgeable persons. You should ask for references and for examples of experience with the species in Connecticut, or New England. Any activity that involves the capture, handling, marking or salvage of wildlife will require the biologist to obtain a DEEP Scientific Collector's Permit authorizing them to perform the specific work proposed at your site.

**\*SAMPLE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT LANGUAGE**

According to our records there are known extant populations of State Listed Species that occur within or close to the boundaries of this property. I have attached a list of species known from this area. Please be advised that this is a preliminary review and not a final determination. A more detailed review will be necessary to move forward with any environmental permit applications submitted to DEEP for the proposed project. **This preliminary assessment letter cannot be used or submitted with permit applications at DEEP.** This letter is valid for one year.

To prevent impacts to State-listed species, field surveys of the site should be performed by a qualified biologist with the appropriate scientific collecting permits at a time when these target species are identifiable. A report summarizing the results of such surveys should include:

1. Survey date(s) and duration
2. Site descriptions and photographs
3. List of component vascular plant and animal species within the survey area (including scientific binomials)
4. Data regarding population numbers and/or area occupied by State-listed species
5. Detailed maps of the area surveyed including the survey route and locations of State listed species
6. Statement/résumé indicating the biologist's qualifications

The site surveys report should be sent to our CT DEEP-NDDB Program ([deep.nddbrequest@ct.gov](mailto:deep.nddbrequest@ct.gov)) for further review by our program biologists along with an updated request for another NDDB review. Incomplete reports may not be accepted.

If you do not intend to do site surveys to determine the presence or absence of state-listed species, then you should presume species are present and let us know how you will protect the state-listed species from being impacted by this project. You may submit these best management practices or protection plans with your new request for an NDDB review. After reviewing your new NDDB request form and the documents describing how you will protect this species from project impacts we will make a final determination and provide you with a letter from our program to use with DEEP-Permits.

Natural Diversity Database information includes all information regarding critical biological resources available to us at the time of the request. This information is a compilation of data collected over the years by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Natural History Survey, cooperating units of DEEP, landowners, private conservation groups and the scientific community. This information is not necessarily the result of comprehensive or site-specific field investigations. Consultations with the NDDDB should not be substitutes for onsite surveys necessary for a thorough environmental impact assessment. The result of this review does not preclude the possibility that listed species may be encountered on site and that additional action may be necessary to remain in compliance with certain state permits.