

PRIME WETLANDS DESIGNATION

FAQ's

SNAKE RIVER WETLAND AREA

Tax Map R-7 Lot 34 - Town of New Hampton
Lot 39 - Town of New Hampton
Lot 47A - Town of New Hampton
Lot 47 - Patricia and Donald Bergeron
Lot 48 - Peter Dumont

What does Prime wetland designation mean?

Prime wetland designation is a way for individual towns to provide additional protection to wetlands that are particularly unique, fragile and/or unspoiled. These wetlands protect and purify our drinking water, buffer us from floods, and harbor a diverse community of plants and animals. Prime wetlands are designated by a municipality according to RSA 482-A:15 and Chapter Env-Wt 700 of the State administrative rules. A Town can vote to have certain high value wetlands be designated as "Prime". If the local vote passes, a map and description of the wetlands is submitted to the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) for approval. Once approved by the State, any filling or dredging proposed for a prime wetland would require a public hearing at the NH Department of Environmental Services in Concord prior to approval.

Have other New Hampshire towns designated prime wetlands?

There are currently about thirty-three (33) towns in New Hampshire that have designated Prime wetland areas.

What changes will I see with a Prime Wetlands Designation?

The State regulates any dredge or fill in wetlands and this would not change if any activity was proposed for a prime wetland. What would change is the requirement to attend a public hearing in Concord should an applicant wish to fill or dredge a prime wetland. Currently there is no buffer setback requirement beyond the edge of the wetlands on the State or local level. Some towns have 50-100 ft. buffers along the wetlands, which would require a separate action with a zoning change and an affirmative vote at town meeting to create any buffer.

So if I want to build something in a prime wetland, how do I go about doing it?

The first step would be to consult the NH Department of Environmental Services. Next would be to figure out where the wetland is. This can be done by someone trained in wetland science that will locate the wetland and put in on a map of your property. The Conservation Commission is a good starting point to consult in this process.