

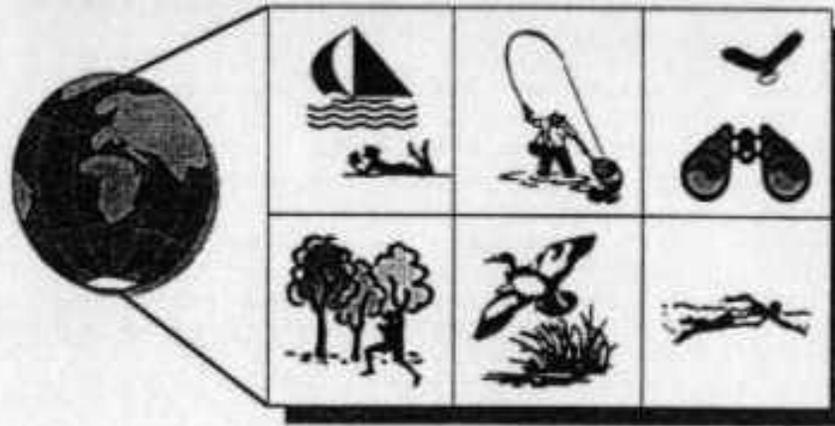
## History and Importance of Wetlands

For years wetlands have been considered unattractive, insect-ridden, swampy wastelands. They were filled, drained and altered in ways to better suit the needs of man without giving a thought to the many important functions they provide.

Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems in the world. Some important functions of wetlands include their natural ability to reduce flood flows, improve water quality, provide critical habitat for many wildlife species (avian, terrestrial and aquatic), filter polluted run-off while detaining sediment, and many more.

In a given area, plants and animals interacting with their environment constitutes an ecosystem. Many plant and animal species are dependant on wetland ecosystems, throughout their life stages, for survival and successful reproduction. Wildlife and plant communities can be significantly impacted through the loss of these habitats. This can lead to severe population declines to complete elimination of species, in extreme situations. Environmental planning and management is an essential tool in ensuring long term productivity and protection of wetland ecosystems. Qualified individuals are able to identify and develop management plans for resource areas based upon various environmental conditions and requirements.

## Geography & Recreation



Stratford is situated along the coastline of Long Island Sound. Tidal wetlands, beaches, dunes and other coastal resource areas comprise most of the southerly portions of town. The Housatonic River, which is a saline environment up to the Sikorsky Bridge (Rt.15), fringes the east, while the inland waters of the Farmill River delineates the northerly town boundary. These two distinct environments, tidal and inland water resources, are attribute's that increase the town's recreation opportunities. The landscape of Stratford varies greatly, from the beaches and dunes along the Sound to the rolling hills of Farmill River Park and Roosevelt Forest Nature Preserve. This allows residents a high degree of recreational diversity. Some of these opportunities include boating, swimming, fishing (salt and fresh-water), hiking, mountain biking, ice skating, birding, and picnicing.



## Protection & Preservation

Wetlands have finally been recognized as a vital part of our natural landscape. Environmental laws and policies have been and continue to be developed with the intent of protecting and preserving our natural environment for future generations to enjoy. We can all benefit from the natural world. Whether it's to enjoy a relaxing walk, conduct scientific research, or realizing new potential health benefits from herbalistic medicine.

Locally, the Stratford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission is empowered to regulate many activities in and around inland wetlands and watercourses. The commission consists of local citizens committed to protecting, preserving and improving the quality of our natural resources. The commission strives to balance the pressures of development with the need for environmental protection, in order to responsibly carry out the duties they are required to perform.

**Environmental Conservation and  
Inland Wetlands Agency:**  
(203) 385-4006-Phone  
(203) 381-6933-Fax

## Environmental Permitting Information\*

Generally, if you are planning to conduct an activity that involves construction; filling; excavations or clearcutting within the regulated setback areas specified in Table 1, an Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Application for Permit is required for the Agencies review. Some examples of regulated activities include:

- ↳ new house construction
  - ↳ a building addition or expansion
  - ↳ installation of a pool
  - ↳ construction and placement of a shed
  - ↳ landscaping improvements
  - ↳ construction of a deck

**Table 1**

<b>Watershed</b>	<b>Regulated Setback Area</b>
<b>Beaver Dam Lake</b>	<b>100 feet</b>
<b>Cranberry Pond</b>	<b>200 feet</b>
<b>Farmill River</b>	<b>350 feet</b>
<b>All other areas</b>	<b>75 feet</b>

The Environmental Conservation Division can assist you in obtaining applications, maps, regulations or to offer additional information on the regulatory process.

\*Please refer to the Stratford Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations for specific information and requirements. This is provided as quick reference only.