

JAMES SIPPERLY
CERTIFIED SOIL SCIENTIST
CONNECTICUT WETLAND SCIENTIST
401 SALEM TURNPIKE BOZRAH, CT 06334
860-334-7073
james.sipperly.js@gmail.com

Douglas K. Brush, Chairman
Town of Montville Inland Wetlands Commission
310 Norwich-New London Road
Uncasville, CT 06382

May 13, 2025

RE: INLAND WETLAND SOILS AND WATERCOURSES INVESTIGATION AND
DELINEATION, NOBLE HILL (PARCEL ID:061-002-000), OWNER JEFFRY
PHILLIPS & JENNIFER MICHAELS

Dear Mr. Brush:

My name is James Sipperly and I am a Certified Soil Scientist and member of the Society of Soil Scientists of Southern New England, a Connecticut Wetland Scientist and a member of the Connecticut Association of Wetland Scientists.

I also feel compelled to you that I am the Environmental Planner for the City of Middletown and staff the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, the Wetland Agent for the Town of Portland and staff their Wetland Commission and I am a member of the Wetland Commission in my home town of Bozrah.

On March 19, 2025 I visited the site referenced above to delineate any inland wetland soils and/or watercourse that may exist on the site relative to a stop work order issued on February 24, 2025. Mr. Phillips has complied with your order and has not conducted any work on the site.

I sampled the soil throughout the area of concern using a soil auger to a depth of two to three feet. Based on my field observations and using the guidelines established by the National Cooperative Soil Survey and as defined by the Connecticut General Statutes, I delineated the wetlands using 10 blue pole flagging. My flags are not numbered here.

On April 5, 2025 the Inland Wetlands Commission conducted a field site visitation to the site referenced above. I attended the site walk and the attendees viewed my delineation and viewed the portions of the site that were the areas of concern.

Inadvertently, Mr. Phillips graded an area that contains inland wetland soils. These soils are classified as a poorly drained Raypol silt loam. He also installed a temporary shelter that is used to store two small boats. The area is presently mulched with woodchips and is stable. Mr. Russo directed Mr. Phillips to install the mulch previously.

The upland areas are classified as a well-drained Canton and Charlton fine sandy loam.

Up until recently, Mr. Phillips has been removing this sand and gravel from a borrow pit established adjacent to this area.

During the April 5, 2025 site visit, other areas of the site were observed. It was requested that an additional area should be investigated. An area near an existing tree deer stand and a portion of the floodplain along Trading Cove Brook.

The area around the tree stand did not contain wetland soils. There was some evidence of surface run-off from a severe storm event, but it does not meet the criteria for an intermittent watercourse. The area along the Trading Cove Brook floodplain was delineated using blue flagging numbered 1-5.

The wetland flags are shown on a site plan entitled:

“Topographic Survey W/ Wetlands, South Woods Subdivision-section A, prepared for Jeffrey Phillips, assessor’s NO: 61-002, Noble Hill Road, Montville CT, scale 1”=20’, dated May 12, 2025, prepared by Rob Hellstrom Land Surveying”

Along the access road a 15”HDPE culvert pipe was installed sometime in the past to access the rear land for a timber harvest. The pipe is functioning well. No erosion has occurred.

I am pleased to report that there are no impacts to the Trading Cove Brook riparian corridor. This system is of high value and provides many wetland functions.

Wetland systems provide numerous biological, physical, hydrological and social functions including: wildlife habitat, finfish habitat, flood control, groundwater infiltration and exfiltration, nutrient retention and sediment trapping, dissipation of erosive forces, water quality renovation, recreation, visual and esthetic quality, ecological integrity, forestry potential and educational opportunities. Not all wetlands possess all functions, nor do they possess those functions in the same degree. In order to assess the potential impacts associated with development within regulated areas, the functions performed by the wetland must be determined and to some extent the relative value of the wetlands ability to perform that function must be assessed. Numerous scientifically based procedures exist for wetland functional assessment.

The basis for this evaluation is a combination of those methods and best professional judgment that I used from excerpts from the “Method for the Evaluation of Inland Wetlands in Connecticut”.

The large wetland corridor associated with Trading Cove Brook that flows in a easterly direction is of high quality and performs numerous functions including, finfish habitat, wildlife habitat, flood control, amphibian habitat, groundwater infiltration, nutrient retention, sediment trapping, dissipation of erosive forces, water quality renovation, and water-based recreation. The value of this wetland system along Trading Cove Brook to provide those functions is high due to the varied hydrology, diverse vegetational communities, wildlife, finfish and soils. Trading Cove Brook is also an important trout management area, and is stocked and managed by the CT DEEP.

PROPOSED MITIGATION

The small inland wetlands area disturbed and temporarily stabilized with wood chips, shall be permanently restored and stabilize.

First, Mr. Phillips has agreed to remove the structure that is being used to store two boats. They will be removed to an area of the property that is upland soils.

The wood chips can remain and additional 4 inches of organic topsoil shall be deposited in this area. The area shall then be seeded with a conservation wetmix that contains native species and promotes and attracts pollinator species. This area will not be mowed.

In addition along the top of slope to the south of the delineated wetlands, 12 native shrub species, such as winterberry, highbush blueberry, silky dogwood, swamp azalea, and sweet pepper bush will be planted to enhance the vegetative diversity of the area. This will provide food and shelter to existing wildlife in the area.

At the outlet of the 15"HDPE pipe, there is a small scour hole that was created by a previous severe storm event. Small diameter rip rap should be added to form a small plunge pool for protection in the future.

The existing gravel borrow area shown on the above referenced plans will be regraded and restored as well. Mark Reynolds, P.E. will create a cross section showing proposed grades. The intent is to eliminate the steep slopes and gently grade them to an appropriate slope. The area will then be topsoiled and grass will be planted. A local farmer is interested in farming this area. Also, Mr. Phillips plans to install bee hives and establish an apiary bee yard.

This is the best time of year to conduct the mitigation measures. I will oversee the establishment of the plantings and monitor them for three growing seasons to ensure their viability for survival

Again, Mr. Phillips has not done any work on the site since the issuance of your order. However, some work needs to be completed as soon as possible.

Based on my professional opinion as a Certified Soil Scientist and years of experience as a City Planner, I feel that this approach will negate the need to move forward with additional enforcement actions and will maintain and improve the existing high quality functions of Trading cove Brook and the environmental quality of the land.

Very truly yours,

James Sipperly

Certified Soil Scientist, Society of Soil Scientists of Southern New England
Connecticut Wetland Scientist, Connecticut Association of Wetland Scientists