

## USFWS Recommends Surveys for Federally-Threatened Small Whorled Pogonia in Virginia

The survey season for small whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*) is fast approaching. As a federally-threatened species, the small whorled pogonia is afforded full protection under the guidelines of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Under Section 7 of the ESA, agencies must ensure that no federally-authorized activities will jeopardize the



continued existence of a listed species and this must be determined by a formal consultation process with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). This means that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), for example, cannot issue a wetland permit unless it is clear that a listed species will not be harmed by the

authorization. Therefore, a detailed survey for small whorled pogonia will likely be required during the wetland permitting process in any of the following counties: **Appomattox, Amherst, Bedford, Botetourt, Buckingham, Campbell, Caroline, Charles City, Craig, Essex, Fairfax, Franklin, Gloucester, Hanover, Henrico, James City, King George, King William, Lee, Madison, New Kent, Prince William, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Wise, and York.**

While habitat surveys can be performed throughout the year, specific surveys can only be performed from **May 25 to July 15** in counties south of Caroline County and from **June 1 to July 20** for areas within or north of Caroline County. Habitat for this species can be characterized as semi-mature to mature mixed upland hardwood forests

with a fairly open understory and minimal aggressive ground level species. The USFWS generally will **not** accept small whorled pogonia surveys (or any federally-listed plant or animal surveys for that matter) from unqualified professionals. In order to be "qualified,"



a professional must be included on the USFWS-maintained list of survey contacts for a particular species. WEG has several ecologists on staff who are listed by the USFWS as survey contacts for small whorled pogonia. These qualified professionals are available to assist you with surveys or any issues that may arise regarding this plant or other listed species in Virginia.

**If you are seeking a federal permit over the next year and your project is within an identified pogonia county, it is strongly advised that you have a detailed pogonia survey conducted during the accepted survey window in the upcoming months.** This is important because if you miss the opportunity, regulatory agencies may require you to wait until the next monitoring season (i.e., next year) before acting on a permit application.

If you have any questions about whether you need a small whorled pogonia study, please contact your WEG project manager at any of our offices: Williamsburg (757) 220-6869, Richmond (804) 267-3474, Herndon (703) 437-3096, or Fredericksburg (540) 785-5544. Please feel free to visit us at [www.wegnet.com](http://www.wegnet.com) for additional information.

## TECHNICAL UPDATE



5209 Center Street  
Williamsburg, Virginia 23188  
Phone: (757) 220-6869  
Fax: (757) 229-4507  
Email: [info@wegnet.com](mailto:info@wegnet.com)

### Branch Offices:

13921 Park Center Road, Ste. 160  
Herndon, Virginia 20171  
Phone: (703) 437-3096

7501 Boulders View Drive, Ste. 205  
Richmond, Virginia 23225  
Phone: (804) 267-3474

5705 Salem Run Blvd., Ste. 105  
Fredericksburg, Virginia 22407  
Phone: (540) 785-5544

1102 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, Florida 33803  
Phone: (863) 686-1718

Presort Standard  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Williamsburg, VA  
Permit #152