

U.S. EPA WILDLIFE DATABASE: A PUBLIC RESOURCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INFORMATION. Melissa Hughes^a

(hughes.melissa@epa.gov), David Bender^a, Jane Copeland^b, Marguerite Pelletier^c, Anne Kuhn^c, and Diane Nacci^c. a, Raytheon Corporation and b SRA International, on contract to US EPA, Narragansett, RI 02882; c, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Narragansett, RI, 02882.

U.S. EPA Office of Research and Development (ORD) is conducting research on the risks of mercury (Hg) to top level predators, such as fish-eating birds and mammals. Related research supported by ORD, EPA Region 1, and the U.S. Geological Service supports the development of the MERGANSER (Mercury Geospatial Assessments for the New England Region) model, which links atmospheric Hg deposition and ecosystem features to predict Hg in freshwater fish consumed by wildlife and humans. Common goals for these projects require comprehensive information on environmental characteristics and quality. To address these needs ORD has developed a publically accessible 'Wildlife Database' (<http://oaspub.epa.gov/aed/wildlife.search>), containing data integrated from national, regional and state-sponsored environmental monitoring programs, academic and conservation organization researchers in the northeastern United States, Wisconsin and Canada. Almost 8800 sites from these various sources have been linked via lake name and location with watershed and lake characteristics, water and sediment chemistry data, and fish contaminant concentration data, to facilitate their integration into geographic information systems for analysis and display. EPA's Wildlife database provides an important and unique resource to support research and the communication of research results with state, regional, and national decision makers about contaminants, such as Hg, and their risks to ecosystems and human health.

Melissa Hughes, Raytheon Corp., on contract to US EPA, 27 Tarzwell Drive, Narragansett, RI, 401-782-3184, 401-782-9710, hughes.melissa@epa.gov.