



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
INLAND FISHERIES & WILDLIFE
353 WATER STREET
41 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA ME 04333-0041



November 17, 2023

Griffin Wood
Terradyn Consultants, LLC
41 Campus Drive, Suite 301
New Gloucester, ME 04260

RE: Information Request – Blue Hill Subdivision, Blue Hill Project (ERID 7072)

Dear Griffin:

Per your request received on August 21, 2023, we have reviewed current Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) information for known locations of Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern species; designated Essential and Significant Wildlife Habitats; and inland fisheries habitat concerns within the vicinity of the *Blue Hill Subdivision, Blue Hill* project. **Please note that as project details are lacking our comments should be considered preliminary.**

Our Department has not mapped any Essential Habitats that would be directly affected by your project. Essential Habitats are areas formally designated as essential to the conservation of a State Endangered or Threatened species and are protected pursuant to the Maine Endangered Species Act (MESA, 12 M.R.S. §12804.2). Currently, Essential Habitats are only designated for three State Endangered coastal breeding bird species.

Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species

Bat Species – Of the eight species of bats that occur in Maine, four species are afforded protection under Maine's Endangered Species Act (MESA, 12 M.R.S. §12801 et. seq.): little brown bat (State Endangered), northern long-eared bat (State Endangered), eastern small-footed bat (State Threatened), and tri-colored bat (State Threatened). The four remaining bat species are designated as Species of Special Concern (Rare): big brown bat, red bat, hoary bat, and silver-haired bat. While a comprehensive statewide inventory for bats has not been completed, based on historical evidence, it is likely that several of these species occur within the project area during spring/fall migration, the summer breeding season, and/or for overwintering. However, our Agency does not anticipate significant impacts to any of the bat species as a result of this project.

Significant Wildlife Habitat

Significant Vernal Pools – Significant Vernal Pools (SVPs) are Significant Wildlife Habitats under Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act. MDIFW's resource maps do not currently document SVPs on the project parcel. However, a comprehensive statewide inventory for SVPs has not been completed. SVPs are not included on MDIFW maps until project areas have been surveyed using approved methods and the survey results confirmed. Thus, their absence from resource maps is not necessarily indicative of an absence on the ground. MDIFW recommends that surveys for vernal pools be conducted within the project boundary by qualified wetland scientists prior to final project design to determine whether there are SVPs present in the area. These surveys should extend up to 250 feet beyond the anticipated project

footprint because of potential performance standard requirements for off-site SVPs, assuming such pools are located on land owned or controlled by the applicant. Once surveys are completed, survey forms should be submitted to our Agency for review well before the submission of any necessary permits. Our Department will need to review and verify any vernal pool data prior to final determination of significance.

Tidal Waterfowl Wading Bird Habitat (TWWH) – This search area includes TWWH, a Significant Wildlife Habitat under Maine's Natural Resources Protection Act. TWWHs provide important feeding and/or breeding habitat for diverse waterfowl and wading bird species. Birds utilize intertidal mudflats, eelgrass, and mussel beds to forage for aquatic invertebrates, a primary food source, and maintaining natural tidal flow is essential to maintaining healthy intertidal areas and food sources to support waterfowl and wading bird species. Based on the location of the search area in relation to this habitat, we recommend that you design your project to provide as much undisturbed buffer as possible to protect this habitat.

Aquatic Resources

Fish Habitat - We generally recommend maintaining 100-foot undisturbed vegetated buffers from the upland edge of all intermittent and perennial streams and any contiguous wetlands. Maintaining and enhancing buffers along these resources is critical to the protection of water temperatures, water quality, natural inputs of coarse woody debris, and various forms of aquatic life necessary to support fish and other aquatic species. Riparian buffers also provide critical habitat and important travel corridors for a variety of wildlife species. Stream crossings should be avoided, but if a stream crossing is necessary, or an existing crossing needs to be modified, it should be designed to provide for full aquatic passage. Small streams, including intermittent streams, can provide crucial rearing habitat, cold water for thermal refugia, and abundant food for juvenile salmonids on a seasonal basis. Undersized crossings may inhibit these functions and become a frequent maintenance problem that causes reoccurring damage to the resource. Generally, MDIFW recommends that all new, modified, and replacement stream crossings be sized to span at least 1.2 times the bankfull width of the stream. In addition, we generally recommend that stream crossings be open bottomed (i.e., natural bottom), although embedded structures which are backfilled with representative streambed material have been shown to be effective in providing habitat connectivity for fish and other aquatic organisms. Construction Best Management Practices should be closely followed to avoid erosion, sedimentation, alteration of stream flow, and other impacts as eroding soils can travel significant distances as well as transport other pollutants resulting in direct impacts to fish, other aquatic life, and their habitats. In addition, we recommend that any necessary instream work occur between July 15 and October 1.

This consultation review has been conducted specifically for known MDIFW jurisdictional features and should not be interpreted as a comprehensive review for the presence of other regulated features that may occur in this area. Prior to the start of any future site disturbance, we recommend additional consultation with the municipality, and other state resource agencies including the Maine Natural Areas Program, Maine Department of Marine Resources, and Maine Department of Environmental Protection in order to avoid unintended protected resource disturbance.