

## SECTION 9

### Unusual Natural Areas

## Section 9. Unusual Natural Areas

### A. Narrative.

The applicant has provided the project plans and documents to the State of Maine Department of Agriculture and Forestry for review of unusual natural areas under the Maine Natural Areas Program. Attached is a response of their review, see Exhibit 9.1.

# Exhibit 9.1



## STATE OF MAINE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY

177 STATE HOUSE STATION  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

JANET T. MILLS  
GOVERNOR

AMANDA E. BEAL  
COMMISSIONER

June 5, 2019

Michael Thompson  
CES  
465 South Main Street  
Brewer, ME 04412

Via email: [mthompson@cesincusa.com](mailto:mthompson@cesincusa.com)

Re: Rare and exemplary botanical features in proximity to: #11657.006, Silver Maple Wind Project, Clifton, Maine

Dear Mr. Thompson:

I have searched the Maine Natural Areas Program's Biological and Conservation Data System files in response to your request received June 5, 2019 for information on the presence of rare or unique botanical features documented from the vicinity of the project in Clifton, Maine. Rare and unique botanical features include the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered plant species and unique or exemplary natural communities. Our review involves examining maps, manual and computerized records, other sources of information such as scientific articles or published references, and the personal knowledge of staff or cooperating experts.

Our official response covers only botanical features. For authoritative information and official response for zoological features you must make a similar request to the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, 284 State Street, Augusta, Maine 04333.

According to the information currently in our Biological and Conservation Data System files, there are no rare botanical features documented specifically within the project area. This lack of data may indicate minimal survey efforts rather than confirm the absence of rare botanical features. You may want to have the site inventoried by a qualified field biologist to ensure that no undocumented rare features are inadvertently harmed.

If a field survey of the project area is conducted, please refer to the enclosed supplemental information regarding rare and exemplary botanical features documented to occur in the vicinity of the project site. The list may include information on features that have been known to occur historically in the area as well as recently field-verified information. While historic records have not been documented in several years, they may persist in the area if suitable habitat exists. The enclosed list identifies features with potential to occur in the area, and it should be considered if you choose to conduct field surveys.

This finding is available and appropriate for preparation and review of environmental assessments, but it is not a substitute for on-site surveys. Comprehensive field surveys do not exist for all natural areas in Maine, and in the absence of a specific field investigation, the Maine Natural Areas Program cannot provide a definitive statement on the presence or absence of unusual natural features at this site.

MOLLY DOCHERTY, DIRECTOR  
MAINE NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM  
BLOSSOM LANE, DEERING BUILDING



PHONE: (207) 287-804490  
WWW.MAINE.GOV/DACF/MNAP

Letter to CES  
Comments RE: Silver Maple Wind, Clifton  
June 5, 2019  
Page 2 of 2

The Maine Natural Areas Program (MNAP) is continuously working to achieve a more comprehensive database of exemplary natural features in Maine. We would appreciate the contribution of any information obtained should you decide to do field work. MNAP welcomes coordination with individuals or organizations proposing environmental alteration, or conducting environmental assessments. If, however, data provided by MNAP are to be published in any form, the Program should be informed at the outset and credited as the source.

The Maine Natural Areas Program has instituted a fee structure of \$75.00 an hour to recover the actual cost of processing your request for information. You will receive an invoice for \$150.00 for two hours of our services.

Thank you for using MNAP in the environmental review process. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions about the Natural Areas Program or about rare or unique botanical features on this site.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kristen Puryear".

Kristen Puryear | Ecologist | Maine Natural Areas Program  
207-287-8043 | [kristen.puryear@maine.gov](mailto:kristen.puryear@maine.gov)

## Rare and Exemplary Botanical Features within 4 miles of Project: #11657.006, Silver Maple Wind, Clifton, Maine

Common Name	State Status	State Rank	Global Rank	Date Last Observed	Occurrence Number	Habitat
<b>Awned Flatsedge</b>	SC	S2	G5	1897-09-16	6	Non-tidal rivershore (non-forested, seasonally wet)
<b>Low-elevation Bald</b>	<null>	S3	GNR	1997-08-28	6	Rocky summits and outcrops (non-forested, upland)
<b>Northern Hardwoods Forest</b>	<null>	S5	G3G5	1997-07-17	1	Hardwood to mixed forest (forest, upland)
<b>Orono Sedge</b>	T	S3	G3	1916-07-18	6	Old field/roadside (non-forested, wetland or upland)
<b>Sandy Lake-bottom</b>	<null>	S5	GNR	1999-07-13	5	Open water (non-forested, wetland)
<b>Showy Lady's-slipper</b>	SC	S3	G4G5	ND	23	Forested wetland, Open wetland, not coastal nor rivershore (non-forested, wetland)
<b>Smooth Sandwort</b>	SC	S3	G4	1997-08-28	5	Rocky summits and outcrops (non-forested, upland)
<b>White Cedar Woodland</b>	<null>	S2	GNR	2017-08-09	7	Conifer forest (forest, upland), Dry barrens (partly forested, upland)

## STATE RARITY RANKS

- S1** Critically imperiled in Maine because of extreme rarity (five or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals or acres) or because some aspect of its biology makes it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the State of Maine.
- S2** Imperiled in Maine because of rarity (6-20 occurrences or few remaining individuals or acres) or because of other factors making it vulnerable to further decline.
- S3** Rare in Maine (20-100 occurrences).
- S4** Apparently secure in Maine.
- S5** Demonstrably secure in Maine.
- SU** Under consideration for assigning rarity status; more information needed on threats or distribution.
- SNR** Not yet ranked.
- SNA** Rank not applicable.
- S#?** Current occurrence data suggests assigned rank, but lack of survey effort along with amount of potential habitat create uncertainty (e.g. S3?).

**Note:** **State Rarity Ranks** are determined by the Maine Natural Areas Program for rare plants and rare and exemplary natural communities and ecosystems. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife determines State Rarity Ranks for animals.

## GLOBAL RARITY RANKS

- G1** Critically imperiled globally because of extreme rarity (five or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals or acres) or because some aspect of its biology makes it especially vulnerable to extinction.
- G2** Globally imperiled because of rarity (6-20 occurrences or few remaining individuals or acres) or because of other factors making it vulnerable to further decline.
- G3** Globally rare (20-100 occurrences).
- G4** Apparently secure globally.
- G5** Demonstrably secure globally.
- GNR** Not yet ranked.

**Note:** **Global Ranks** are determined by NatureServe.

## STATE LEGAL STATUS

**Note:** State legal status is according to 5 M.R.S.A. § 13076-13079, which mandates the Department of Conservation to produce and biennially update the official list of Maine's **Endangered and Threatened** plants. The list is derived by a technical advisory committee of botanists who use data in the Natural Areas Program's database to recommend status changes to the Department of Conservation.

- E** ENDANGERED; Rare and in danger of being lost from the state in the foreseeable future; or federally listed as Endangered.
- T** THREATENED; Rare and, with further decline, could become endangered; or federally listed as Threatened.

## NON-LEGAL STATUS

- SC** SPECIAL CONCERN; Rare in Maine, based on available information, but not sufficiently rare to be considered Threatened or Endangered.
- PE** Potentially Extirpated; Species has not been documented in Maine in past 20 years or loss of last known occurrence has been documented.

## ELEMENT OCCURRENCE RANKS - EO RANKS

Element Occurrence ranks are used to describe the quality of a rare plant population or natural community based on three factors:

- **Size**: Size of community or population relative to other known examples in Maine. Community or population's viability, capability to maintain itself.
- **Condition**: For communities, condition includes presence of representative species, maturity of species, and evidence of human-caused disturbance. For plants, factors include species vigor and evidence of human-caused disturbance.
- **Landscape context**: Land uses and/or condition of natural communities surrounding the observed area. Ability of the observed community or population to be protected from effects of adjacent land uses.

These three factors are combined into an overall ranking of the feature of **A**, **B**, **C**, or **D**, where **A** indicates an **excellent** example of the community or population and **D** indicates a **poor** example of the community or population. A rank of **E** indicates that the community or population is **extant** but there is not enough data to assign a quality rank. The Maine Natural Areas Program tracks all occurrences of rare (S1-S3) plants and natural communities as well as A and B ranked common (S4-S5) natural communities.

**Note:** **Element Occurrence Ranks** are determined by the Maine Natural Areas Program for rare plants and rare and exemplary natural communities and ecosystems. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife determines Element Occurrence ranks for animals.

Visit our website for more information on rare, threatened, and endangered species!  
<http://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap>