



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



November 3, 2020

Sean Hale
Vanasse Hangren Brustlin, Inc.
500 Southborough Dr, Suite 105B
South Portland, ME 04106

RE: Information Request – Boyne Resorts Sugarloaf West Mountain Project, Carrabassett Valley

Dear Sean:

Per your request received on September 30, 2020, 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 *Boyne Resorts Sugarloaf West Mountain* project in Carrabassett Valley. Note that as project details are lacking, and due to the general nature and scale of the map that was provided, our comments should be considered preliminary.

Our Department has not mapped any Essential Habitats that would be directly affected by your project.

Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species

Bat Species – Of the eight species of bats that occur in Maine, the three *Myotis* species are protected under Maine’s Endangered Species Act (MESA) and are afforded special protection under 12 M.R.S. §12801 - §12810. The three *Myotis* species include little brown bat (State Endangered), northern long-eared bat (State Endangered), and eastern small-footed bat (State Threatened). The five remaining bat species are listed as Special Concern: big brown bat, red bat, hoary bat, silver-haired bat, and tri-colored 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 migration and/or the breeding season. However, our Agency does not anticipate significant impacts to any of the bat species as a result of this project.

Bicknell’s Thrush - Bicknell’s Thrush, a Species of Special Concern, occur in the project area. Bicknell’s thrush can be found in sub-alpine forests usually dominated by balsam fir and red spruce at elevations >2,700 feet, that typically have a history of disturbance resulting in a stunted dense understory. We recommend that suitable Bicknell’s thrush habitat be avoided. Furthermore, to minimize potential impacts to breeding Bicknell’s thrush we recommend that no clearing or construction activity adjacent to these types of habitats occur from May 1 through July 31.

Roaring Brook Mayfly – The Roaring Brook mayfly, a State Threatened Species, may occur in the project area. This species can occur in high elevation, headwater streams draining off forested (hardwood or mixed) slopes at or above 1,000 feet (including unmapped streams) within or adjacent to the currently documented range (northern Appalachian Mountain Range, stretching from Mt. Katahdin to western border with New Hampshire and Quebec). Any instream work in perennial or intermittent streams, or clearing in the vicinity of these streams, has the potential to impact this species. We recommend that no

development or permanent land use conversion occur within the 250-foot riparian buffer of any streams containing this species.

Northern Spring Salamander - Northern spring salamanders, a State-listed Species of Special Concern, may occur in the project area. Any instream work or work adjacent to high elevation headwater streams in this area, including both unmapped perennial and intermittent streams, has the potential to impact this species. They are also found in larger third order streams and rivers with suitable substrate (large cobble and/or gravel bars) within the documented range of primarily the western Maine mountains north and east into mountains of central Penobscot County. We recommend that no development or permanent land use conversion occur within the 250-foot riparian buffer of any streams containing this species.

Significant Wildlife Habitat

Significant Vernal Pools - At this time MDIFW Significant Wildlife Habitat (SWH) maps indicate no known presence of SWHs subject to protection under the Natural Resources Protection Act (NRPA) within the project area, which include Waterfowl and Wading Bird Habitats, Seabird Nesting Islands, Shorebird Areas, and Significant Vernal Pools. However, a comprehensive statewide inventory for Significant Vernal Pools has not been completed. Therefore, we recommend 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 Significant Vernal Pools 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 Significant Vernal Pools, 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.

Fisheries Habitat

We recommend that 100-foot undisturbed vegetated buffers be maintained along streams. Buffers should be measured from the edge of stream or associated fringe and floodplain wetlands. Maintaining and enhancing buffers along streams that support coldwater fisheries 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 conditions required by many fish 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 full fish 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 and undersized crossings may inhibit these functions. 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 not only providing habitat connectivity for fish but also for 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 from construction activities can travel significant distances as well as transport other pollutants resulting in direct impacts to fish and fisheries habitat. 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

Letter to Sean Hale, Vanasse Hangren Brustlin, Inc.
Comments RE: Boyne Resorts Sugarloaf West Mountain Project, Carrabassett Valley
November 3, 2020

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.

Please feel free to contact my office if you have any questions regarding this information, or if I can be of any further assistance.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Becca Settele', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Becca Settele
Wildlife Biologist