Big Rock Ski Area

EDA Environmental Narrative



January 5, 2022

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A. <u>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</u>

1. Beneficiaries

Big Rock Ski Area is located on Mars Hill Mountain near the Canadian border with New Brunswick. The mountain is 1,748 feet in elevation and is the highest peak in northeast Maine and home not only to the ski area but the International Appalachian Trail extension and a large 28 turbine windmill facility. Mars Hill Mountain rises above the gently rolling farmland of Aroostook County. Maine Winter Sports Center (MWSC) purchased the 290-acre Big Rock Ski Area, thanks in large part to a \$1.5 million grant from the Libra Foundation. Ownership of the ski area has since been transferred to Big Rock, a duly organized nonprofit corporation.

Big Rock is a 501 (c) (3) corporation whose purpose is to manage and operate an alpine skiing facility. Located at Big Rock facility is a lodge and restaurant which is operated by Mars Hill IGA. Other beneficiaries of a longer ski season include businesses located in downtown Mars Hill including but not limited to restaurants, hotels, rental cabins, gas stations, and convenience stores.

2. Proposed Construction

The proposed new chairlift to the top was identified by Snow Engineering Consulting Group as the top priority project for future growth and sustainability of the mountain in the 2020 Big Rock Master Plan Update. The chairlift will be a fixed-grip quad chair that starts in front of the existing lodge and ends at the top of the mountain at a point central to existing trail layout. The lift will raise 930 vertical feet over a slope length of 3,624 feet with thirteen towers. The installation will include lift operator houses at the base and top of the mountain with the electrical drive unit and hydrostatic gas backup in the base terminal.

The project will need significant earthwork, concrete foundations at the base/top operator terminals and towers, and electrical power distribution infrastructure.

The existing snowmaking system is served by a 200 HP/400 GPM pump located near the base of the existing Doppelmayr triple chairlift. The snowmaking system is undersized to maintain the pressure and flows needed to operate existing snow gun equipment and open the mountain in time for the crucial Christmas Break. With temperatures increasing over the previous decades this has placed even more emphasis on snowmaking at ski resorts worldwide.

The existing water piping infrastructure of 10 in. and 8 in. pipes covers 41.2 skiable acres and is sized to handle flows exceeding 2000 GPM. Water reservoir holding capacity of 1-1.5 million gallons is a significant limiting factor and requires auxiliary pumping from a nearby stream. Based upon industry average requirements of 3-feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snow making, the total water requirements to cover all snowmaking terrain is 18 million gallons of water.

The proposed snowmaking upgrades will consist of the following:

- 1. Expansion of Snowmaking Reservoir Capacity. The existing water reserve capacity is provided by 4 small reservoirs created by earthen dams. The proposed reservoir expansion will expand capacity by increasing the contained volume of the existing reservoirs or by adding additional reservoirs. Earthwork contractors will excavate dirt from the interior to build embankments around the perimeter. A membrane liner will contain the water inside the earthen bowl created by the banks. All necessary federal, state, and local permits will be applied for, and federal standards followed in the design and construction.
- 2. Water Pump and Air Plant Building. An extension will be added to the existing Pumphouse building and skid mounted water pump and air compressor systems installed to serve as the primary air/water supply. Pre-engineered units with all piping, fittings, and variable frequency drives will be purchased from an equipment vendor who specializes in snowmaking systems to remove many variables of the construction process and greatly reduce project management.
- **3.** Air Pipe Installation. 10,000 feet of 4 1/2" x 0.188 piping will need to be run on the westerly side of trails where tower style snowmaking guns will be installed. The piping will be welded by licensed welders and terminated at hydrant locations for connection to the snow guns.
- 4. Low-E Snowmaking Tower Guns Procurement and Installation. 100 low energy, high efficiency tower style snow guns will be installed on the westerly side of the primary trails. At each tower location, air and water hydrants with adjustment valves will be installed for connection to the tower gun.

A preliminary engineering report is being submitted concurrently

3. Need and Purpose

Changing weather patterns (warmer winters) have created the need for improving and increasing snowmaking in the ski industry. Ski seasons, using natural snow, have become shorter making ski resorts relying on natural snow less economically viable. Big Rock currently operates older, less efficient snowmaking equipment and has a 1-million gallon water retention pond located at the site. This pond has insufficient capacity needed to maintain an adequate snow base for an entire ski season. The expansion of the pond will allow for a longer snowmaking season, earlier and later in the year.

Upgrades to the current chairlift also will allow for greater comfort for the skier and make Big Rock more competitive in the market. Upgrades are also more energy efficient thereby reducing costs to the facility.

4. Alternatives to the Proposed Project

Several alternate sites were preliminarily identified. These were eliminated as the project is an expansion to an existing pond and upgrade to the chairlift.

B. <u>HISTORIC/ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES</u>

According to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, there are no historic properties (architectural or archaeological) affected by this project. See attached letter.

C. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

For the resource areas identified below, indicate potential direct and indirect impacts from proposed project activities and specify proposed measures to mitigate probable impacts. Direct impacts are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place. Indirect impacts are those that are caused by a proposed action, but that may occur later in time or farther removed in distance, relative to the primary impacts of the proposed action (40 C.F.R. Section 1508.8) Development induced by the proposed project would be an example of an indirect impact.

1. Affected Area

Big Rock Ski Area is located on Mars Hill Mountain near the Canadian border with New Brunswick. The mountain is 1,748 feet in elevation and is the highest peak in northeast Maine. Mars Hill Mountain is also home to the International Appalachian Trail extension and a large 28 turbine windmill facility. Mars Hill Mountain rises above the gently rolling farmland of Aroostook County. The mountain is a cap of conglomerate rock sitting on limestone.

The parcel is located entirely within the town of Mars Hill which is located on State Routes 1 and 1-A. The site has been a ski slope since 1954 when it was developed with trails and a ski tow by the Mars Hill Junior Chamber of Commerce. At present the site is an active ski area with associated lodge, snow making equipment, pond, trails, snow tubing areas, and 4 lifts. A small unnamed stream is located along the western edge of the property and is used to obtain water for snowmaking. A retention pond is in this area.

There are no State or National Parks, National Wildlife Refuges, or National Game Reserves on or near the site. Site photos and maps are available in the Appendix.

2. Coastal Zones

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) there are no coastal zones located in Aroostook County. Therefore, this project is not subject to the Coastal Zone Management Act.

3. Wetlands

According to the National Wetland Inventory, there is a 0.7 acre Freshwater Emergent Wetland located on the property (see attached map). The project is not expected to impact this wetland.

4. Floodplains

According to the Flood Insurance Rate Map for the Town of Mars Hill (October 24, 1978) there are no floodplains located on the project site nor are there any located in close proximity. A FIRMette utilizing FEMA's Flood Map Service Center was created on December 8, 2021 and has been attached. Based on the information provided, there would be no construction located within the 100-year floodplains nor would a floodplain be impacted by this project.

Mars Hill (CID 230026#) has been an active member in the National Flood Insurance Program since June 21, 1974. The Town's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) was identified on October 24, 1978.

No critical action is being located within the 500-year floodplain as part of this project.

5. Endangered Species

The US Fish and Wildlife Service's Information for Planning and Consultation tool (IPaC) lists the following species that could potentially be affected by activities at Big Rock:

- Canada Lynx (Threatened)
- Northern Long-eared Bat (Threatened)
- Monarch Butterfly (Candidate)

There are no critical habitats at this location (see attached IPaC report). According to the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's (IF&W) Regional Wildlife Biologist, the installation of a new chairlift and improvements to snow making equipment should cause no adverse impact to State-listed bats or other wildlife. (Email attached).

6. Land Use and Zoning

Big Rock is located entirely within the Town of Mars Hill. Mars Hill has town-wide zoning and a Site Design Review process administered by the code enforcement officer and Planning Board. The site is currently an operating commercial ski slope with associated trails, chair lifts, snow making, ponds, and lodge. The site is located in the Rural Farm District and commercial recreation is an allowed use with Planning Board review. According to the code enforcement officer, pond expansion is not subject to standards within Mars Hill's zoning ordinance.

The site has not identified as prime or unique farmland by the United States Department of Agriculture.

7. Solid Waste Management

Solid waste generated within the Town of Mars Hill is collected and disposed of through a contact between the Town and Pine Tree Waste. Pine Tree provides curbside collection, plus operates a transfer station in Mars Hill. Subsequently, Pine Tree has a contact with Aroostook Waste Solutions (AWS) to take the waste at either the Tri-Community landfill in Fort

Fairfield or the Presque Isle landfill. According to the AWS' Director, there is sufficient landfill capacity to dispose of any waste generated at Big Rock. AWS also has the capacity to dispose of any demolition debris generated by the project.

Recycling efforts at Big Rock include carboard, batteries, cans and bottles, and any #2 plastic generated on site.

8. Hazardous or Toxic Substances

According to the site owners, hazardous and toxic substances will not be utilized or produced by the facility.

9. Water Resources

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (MDEP) included the flow criteria worksheets for three water withdrawal locations at Big Rock Ski Area: one for the unnamed brook at the existing snowmaking ponds, one for the same brook where it crosses East Blaine Road, and one for Boynton Brook where it crosses East Blaine Road (see the maps on the flow criteria sheets). NMDC's letter indicates a water need of 18.0 million gallons (55.2 acre-feet). The following chart, developed by MDEP) shows the estimated water volumes that could be captured annually at these withdrawal locations for storage in the snowmaking ponds:

WATER RESOURCE	WITHDRAWAL LOCATION	WATER POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE FOR CAPTURE & STORAGE ANNUALLY
Unnamed Brook (≂along Trail 19/27 & Graves Rd.)	at existing snowmaking ponds	15.6 million gallons
Unnamed Brook (≂along Trail 19/27 & Graves Rd.)	at East Blaine Road	28.3 million gallons
Boynton Brook	at East Blaine Road	118.6 million gallons

These potential volumes do not account for water losses due to pond leakage and surface evaporation. The potential volumes are based on median and mean stream flow estimates using USGS regression equations. Unfortunately, the drainage areas for the unnamed brook and Boynton Brook are well outside the range for which the equations were developed; thus, the potential errors in the flow estimates may be substantial. It is estimated that the unnamed brook would be unreliable as a water source and, so, some significant withdrawals from Boynton Brook would be necessary most years.

10. Water Supply and Distribution System

According to the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, drinking water is supplied by private well, owned by Big Rock, located on site. The well is a 360-foot deep, 6 inch diameter drilled well that yields 12 gallons per minute. Water quality is tested annually with no issues being reported. Yields are adequate for current and projected uses. The expansion of the pond system and upgrade to the chairlift is not expected to impact this well.

11. Wastewater Collection and Treatment Facilities

Wastewater is disposed of at two (2) on-site private subsurface wastewater disposal systems. One system was constructed in 2004 and designed to accommodate one rest room for Big Rock staff members. The system consists of a 1,000 gallon concrete treatment tank and a 270 square foot disposal field. It was designed to handle 60 gallons per day based on use by 4 employees. This system is located next to the maintenance shop and not open to the general public.

The lodge's system is comprised of a 3,000 gallon concrete tank and an 8,200 square foot disposal field. This system was designed to handle 1,995 gallons per day (based on 400 users per day) and was constructed in 2000 and located next to the lodge.

Both systems were designed by a licensed Maine soil site evaluator No expansion to the system is expected as both are adequate for current and projected uses.

12. Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898)

The project will upgrade the chairlift and expand the snowmaking pond on a previously developed site. There will not be any displacement or impacts to any residential properties. The parcel falls within the Rural Farm zoned area of Mars Hill and is surrounded by primarily vacant land.

The purpose of Big Rock to improve the social, physical and communal well-being of the residents of Aroostook County, Maine by the provision of recreational ski facilities, instruction, youth recreational ski programs, school physical education programming and related services free of charge or at fees which are below actual cost; and to relieve the municipal and county governments and school districts of Aroostook County, Maine from the burdens of providing to residents healthy, outdoor-based winter recreational sporting opportunities. Once completed, this project will further the mission of Big Rock.

13. Transportation (Streets, Traffic and Parking)

Big Rock is located on the Graves Road which is classified as a local road and under the jurisdiction of the Town of Mars Hill. This road serves recreation, residential, industrial, and vacant properties in Mars Hill. Upgrades to the chairlift and the expansion of ponds will not impact traffic patterns and does not impact the level of service of any of the area streets or significant intersections in town.

14. Air Quality

According to the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, the Big Rock property is not classified as a "non-attainment" area as there are no such areas located in Aroostook County. The Department of Environmental Protection was also contacted regarding the need for Air Emission license requirements. The pumps and compressors for the snowmaking equipment are currently, and will remain, electrically powered. Based upon this information, MDEP staff indicated that there would not be a requirement to apply for an air emission license. (see attached email).

15. Noise

According to the engineer, local ambient noise levels will not increase as pumps and compressors will not be altered or changed. Any additional noise generated during the construction phase will be temporary and not affect neighboring areas.

16. Permits

The following permits would be required to complete this project:

- Town of Mars Hill Land Use Permit
- State of Maine Chapter 587 Water Withdrawal Permit
- State of Maine Natural Resource Protection Act Permit
- State of Maine Site Location of Development Permit

Once funding is obtained and final engineering completed, permit applications will be submitted to the appropriate local and state agencies.

17. Public Notification/Controversy

The public was notified of the project through the municipal website (<u>https://marshillmaine.org/</u>) on November 29, 2021. Notification to affected agencies was sent in December 2021. Big Rock has not received any information to indicate that there is controversy or objections to this project.

18. Cumulative Effects

No direct or indirect cumulative impacts have been identified.

D. <u>MITIGATION</u>

Significant groundwork is anticipated during the construction phase of this project. Erosion and sediment control measures will be installed and maintained to ensure that nearby waterbodies are protected. Dust control will also be incorporated during the construction phase to minimize potential nuisance conditions. Once construction is completed, seeding of all bare soil will be completed.

E. <u>LIST OF ATTACHMENTS</u>

The following checklist is a list of required and optional attachments to the Environmental Narrative as described in the sections above. SHPO/THPO and Tribal leader comments and copy of submittals (see Section B)

- Site photographs (see Section C1)
- Coastal Zone consistency determination (see C2)
- o Wetland delineation and/or Jurisdictional Determination (see C3)
- o Preliminary wetland info (see C3)
- O.U.S. Army Corps of Engineers comments, Section 404 Permit, Section 10 Permit, and/or Water Quality Certification (401 approval) (see C3)
- o Biological Assessment and/or survey for federally protected species (see C5)
- Correspondence with US Fish and Wildlife Service and/or National Marine Fisheries Service (see C5)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service determination of Prime Farmland, Form AD-1006, if applicable (see C6)
- Phase I and II Environmental Site Assessment (seeC8)
- Sole Source Aquifer review by US Environmental Protection Agency, if applicable (see C9)
- o Other federal, state and local environmental permits (see C16)
- o Copies of public notices, public hearing minutes, etc. (see C17)

Appendix A: Applicant Certification Clause

The applicant represents and certifies that it has used due diligence to determine that the description of the project site described herein is accurate with respect to the presence or absence of contamination from toxic and hazardous substances. The term "site" includes the entire scope of the project, including future phases of the project and all areas where construction will occur.

- 1. Is the site currently, or has it in the past 50 years, been used for any of the following operations or activities:
- a. Generation of hazardous substances or waste? _____ Yes ___X__ No
- b. Treatment, storage (temporary or permanent), or disposal of solid or hazardous substances or waste?

_____ Yes <u>____</u> No

- c. Storage of petroleum products? _____ Yes <u>X</u> No
- d. Used/waste oil storage or reclamation units? _____ Yes ___X___ No
- e. Research or testing laboratory? _____ Yes ____ No
- f. Ordinance research, testing, production, use, or storage? _____ Yes _X___ No
- g. Chemical manufacturing or storage? _____ Yes <u>X</u> No
- h. Weapons or ammunition training, use, or testing? _____ Yes __X__ No
- i. Iron works/foundry? _____ Yes ___X ___ No
- j. Railroad yard? _____ Yes <u>X</u> No
- k. Industrial or manufacturing operation? _____ Yes <u>X_</u> No

If any of the above operations ever occurred at the site, and if appropriate cleanup or other mitigation actions were performed in accordance with the local, State, and federal laws, please attach documentation of these actions.

2. Do wells draw from an underlying aquifer to provide the local domestic water supply?

Appendix A: Applicant Certification Clause

<u>X</u> Yes No

3. Has a federal, State, or local regulatory authority ever conducted an environmental assessment, environmental impact statement, or a preliminary assessment/site inspection, or similar environmental surveyor inspection report at the site? If yes, please list here and attach copies of these reports or results.

	Yes <u></u> _N	10		
1)				
2)				
3)				
4)				
5)				

4. Have any environmental or OSHA citations or notices of violation been issued to a facility at the site? If yes, please attach copies.

_____ Yes <u>____</u> No

- Have any unauthorized releases of hazardous substances occurred at any facility at the site which resulted in notification of the EPA's National Response Center?
 Yes X
- Is any material containing asbestos or lead paint located at the site? If yes, please attach information concerning State and federal regulatory compliance.
 Yes X No
- Is there any equipment (electrical transformers, etc.) containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) on the site? If yes, please attach a description of the equipment.
 Yes X
- Are there underground or above ground storage tanks on the site? If yes, please attach a detailed description, including the number of underground storage tanks on the site, whether the tanks have been inspected (or removed) and the results of such inspections.
 Yes X_ No
 - Has the site been tested for radon? If yes, please attach results.

_____ Yes <u>X___</u> No

9.

10. Have there been, or are there now any environmental investigations by federal, State or local government agencies that could affect the site in question? If yes, please attach available information.

Appendix A: Applicant Certification Clause

_____ Yes <u>X</u>___ No

The applicant acknowledges that this certification regarding hazardous substances and/or waste is a material representation of fact upon which EDA relies when making and executing an award. EDA reserves the right to terminate any award made in conjunction with the representations contained herein if, at any time during the useful life of the project, EDA becomes aware of the presence of hazardous materials or waste at the site, or that hazardous materials or waste have been inappropriately handled thereon.

Further, if it is determined at any time that the presence of hazardous materials or waste, or handling thereof, has been misrepresented, EDA may pursue other available legal remedies against the applicant.

Big Rock Applicant's Name McCrum - President-Boordof directors Biglack 977.P Name and Title of Applicant's Authorized Representative 1-5-2022

Signature of Applicant's Authorized Representative

Date





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NEPAssist Report

Big Rock

Input Coordinates:	46.523144,-67.836433	,46.523144,-67.820791	,46.518848,-67.820791	,46.518848,-
67.836433,46.523	144,-67.836433			

Project Area	0.22 sq mi
Within an Ozone 8-hr (1997 standard) Non-Attainment/Maintenance Area?	no
Within an Ozone 8-hr (2008 standard) Non-Attainment/Maintenance Area?	no
Within a Lead (2008 standard) Non-Attainment/Maintenance Area?	no
Within a SO2 1-hr (2010 standard) Non-Attainment/Maintenance Area?	no
Within a PM2.5 24hr (2006 standard) Non-Attainment/Maintenance Area?	no
Within a PM2.5 Annual (1997 standard) Non-Attainment/Maintenance Area?	no
Within a PM2.5 Annual (2012 standard) Non-Attainment/Maintenance Area?	no
Within a PM10 (1987 standard) Non-Attainment/Maintenance Area?	no
Within a Federal Land?	no
Within an impaired stream?	yes
Within an impaired waterbody?	no
Within a waterbody?	no
Within a stream?	yes
Within an NWI wetland?	Available Online
Within a Brownfields site?	no
Within a Superfund site?	no
Within a Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) site?	no
Within a water discharger (NPDES)?	no
Within a hazardous waste (RCRA) facility?	no
Within an air emission facility?	no
Within a school?	no
Within an airport?	no
Within a hospital?	no
Within a designated sole source aquifer?	no
Within a historic property on the National Register of Historic Places?	no
Within a Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) site?	no
Within a Land Cession Boundary?	no
Within a tribal area (lower 48 states)?	no
Within the service area of a mitigation or conservation bank?	no
Within the service area of an In-Lieu-Fee Program?	yes

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service **National Wetlands Inventory**

Big Rock Ski Area- Mars Hill Maine



November 22, 2021

Wetlands

- Estuarine and Marine Wetland

Estuarine and Marine Deepwater

- Freshwater Pond

Freshwater Emergent Wetland

Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland

Lake Other Riverine This map is for general reference only. The US Fish and Wildlife Service is not responsible for the accuracy or currentness of the base data shown on this map. All wetlands related data should be used in accordance with the layer metadata found on the Wetlands Mapper web site.



November 23, 2021

Kirk F. Mohney Director Maine Historic Preservation Commission 65 State House Station Augusta, ME 04333-0065

Dear Mr. Mohney:

Big Rock will be submitting a grant application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to replace a 50-year-old ski lift with a new top to bottom lift, expand snowmaking capability to extend the ski season at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill. Based upon an average requirement for 3 feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snowmaking, the total water requirement to cover all snowmaking terrain amounts to nearly 18 million gallons of water. Snowmaking water is currently drawn from four snowmaking ponds above the base area, which have an aggregate storage capacity of about 1 million gallons. Water storage in the four ponds is augmented by surface water collected from a nearby stream. Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is assisting Big Rock with he submission of this application.

A project description and site maps are enclosed for your review of any potential impacts on the National Historic Preservation Act, Archeological and Historic Preservation Act and Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment, E.O 11593. Your written comments concerning any effect this project may have on archeological and historic preservation are necessary. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 493-5757 or jkamm@nmdc.org

Sincerely,

Jay Kamm, Senior Planner



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency

www.nmdc.org

11 West Presque Isle Rd., PO Box 779, Caribou, ME 04736 Voice: (207) 498-8736, Toll Free in ME: 1-800-427-8736, Fax: (207) 493-3108, TTY: (207) 498-6377



MAINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION 55 CAPITOL STREET 65 STATE HOUSE STATION AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333



KIRK F. MOHNEY DIRECTOR

December 20, 2021

Mr. Jay Kamm Northern Maine Development Commission PO Box 779 Caribou, ME 04736

Project: MHPC #1941-21

Big Rock Ski Area Replace Existing Chairlift

Town: Mars Hill, ME

Dear Mr. Kamm:

In response to your recent request, I have reviewed the information received December 14, 2021 to continue consultation on the above referenced project in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA).

Based on the information submitted, I have concluded that there will be no historic properties (architectural or archaeological) affected by this proposed undertaking, as defined by Section 106.

Please contact Megan Rideout at (207) 287-2992 or <u>megan.m.rideout@maine.gov</u> if we can be of further assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Kuht. Mohrey

Kirk F. Mohney State Historic Preservation Officer



November 23, 2021

Eric Kennedy, P.E. Maine Department of Environmental Protection 17 State House Station Augusta, ME 04333-0017

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

Big Rock will be submitting a grant application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to replace a 50-year-old ski lift with a new top to bottom lift, expand snowmaking capability to extend the ski season at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill. Based upon an average requirement for 3 feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snowmaking, the total water requirement to cover all snowmaking terrain amounts to nearly 18 million gallons of water. Snowmaking water is currently drawn from four snowmaking ponds above the base area, which have an aggregate storage capacity of about 1 million gallons. Water storage in the four ponds is augmented by surface water collected from a nearby stream. Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is assisting Big Rock with the submission of this application.

One of the requirements Big Rock must fulfill is to ensure the funding agency that the proposed work will be in compliance with the Clean Air Act. Your written comments concerning any effect this project may have on the protection and improvement of air law are necessary

A project description and site maps are enclosed for your review. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 493-5757 or <u>jkamm@nmdc.org</u>

Sincerely.

Jay Kamm, Senior Planner



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency

Jay Kamm

From: Sent: To: Subject: Kennedy, Eric <Eric.Kennedy@maine.gov> Monday, December 6, 2021 12:45 PM Jay Kamm RE: Proposed Project at BigRock Mountain



Hi Jay,

Thank you for getting back to me. Based on your response, the project does not trigger the requirement to apply for an air emission license.

Thanks again, and good luck with the project.

Eric

Eric Kennedy, P.E. Director, Division of Licensing and Compliance Bureau of Air Quality Maine Department of Environmental Protection (207) 530-3139 (cell) www.maine.gov/dep

From: Jay Kamm <jkamm@nmdc.org> Sent: Monday, December 6, 2021 10:05 AM To: Kennedy, Eric <Eric.Kennedy@maine.gov> Subject: RE: Proposed Project at BigRock Mountain

EXTERNAL: This email originated from outside of the State of Maine Mail System. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Good morning Eric

Thank you for responding. I was out of state last week and unable to respond.

The pumps and compressors for the snowmaking equipment are currently and would be, electrically powered as they are more efficient. I will, if needed, get more specific information.

Please do not hesitate to contact me

Jay

From: Kennedy, Eric <<u>Eric.Kennedy@maine.gov</u>>
Sent: Friday, December 3, 2021 11:52 AM
To: Jay Kamm <<u>jkamm@nmdc.org</u>>
Subject: Proposed Project at BigRock Mountain

X		
Hilav		

I received your letter regarding the proposed project at BigRock Mountain to replace a ski lift and expand snowmaking operations. I understand as part of the process to receive grant funding for the project BigRock Mountain must ensure that the project is constructed in compliance with the Clean Air Act. The Bureau of Air Quality administers an air emission licensing program for certain sources of air emissions in accordance with 06-096 Code of Maine Regulations (C.M.R.) ch. 115, *Major and Minor Source Air Emission License Regulations*.

This regulation generally covers stationary sources that install or operate fuel burning sources that either alone, or in combination exceed a heat input capacity of 10 million British thermal units per hour (10 MMBtu/hr) or sources that install or operate processes that emit more than 10 pounds per hour (10 lb/hr) or more than 100 pounds per day (100 lb/day) of any regulated pollutant. The description of the proposed project in your letter did not identify any fuel burning equipment or processes that would appear to trigger any of these air emission license thresholds.

One question I had in reading the description of the project was whether the pumps or compressors associated with the plans to expand snowmaking operations would be powered by fuel burning equipment (i.e, generators) or will they be powered by electricity from the electric grid?

If we determine that no air emission license is required for the proposed project, then the only thing we would request is that any potential fugitive emissions (i.e., dust) from construction activities associated with project be minimized and/or controlled to prevent any nuisance conditions.

Thank you.

Eric

Eric Kennedy, P.E. Director, Division of Licensing and Compliance Bureau of Air Quality Maine Department of Environmental Protection (207) 530-3139 (cell) www.maine.gov/dep



November 23, 2021

Bill Sheehan Maine Department of Environmental Protection 1235 Central Drive Presque Isle, ME 04769

Dear Mr. Sheehan:

Big Rock will be submitting a grant application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to replace a 50-year-old ski lift with a new top to bottom lift, expand snowmaking capability to extend the ski season at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill. Based upon an average requirement for 3 feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snowmaking, the total water requirement to cover all snowmaking terrain amounts to nearly 18 million gallons of water. Snowmaking water is currently drawn from four snowmaking ponds above the base area, which have an aggregate storage capacity of about 1 million gallons. Water storage in the four ponds is augmented by surface water collected from a nearby stream. Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is assisting Big Rock with the submission of this application.

One of the requirements Big Rock must fulfill is to ensure the funding agency that the proposed work will be in compliance with the Site Location Law and Natural Resource Protection Act. Your written comments concerning any effect this project may have on these rules, regulations, or policies are necessary

A project description and site maps are enclosed for your review. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 493-5757 or jkamm@nmdc.org

Sincerely

Jav Kamm. Senior Planner



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency

www.nmdc.org

11 West Presque Isle Rd., PO Box 779, Caribou, ME 04736 Voice: (207) 498-8736, Fax: 1-866-493-1388, TTY: (207) 493-5856

Jay Kamm

From:	Sheehan, Bill J <bill.j.sheehan@maine.gov></bill.j.sheehan@maine.gov>
Sent:	Tuesday, December 7, 2021 6:44 PM
То:	Jay Kamm
Subject:	FW: ski area snowmaking water needs
Attachments:	BigRock Ski Area Brook at Snowmaking Ponds Flow Criteria.pdf; BigRock Ski Area Brook at East Blaine Road Flow Criteria.pdf; Boynton Brook at East Blaine Road Flow Criteria.pdf



Bill

From: Mcglauflin, Arthur T <Arthur.T.Mcglauflin@maine.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 6, 2021 12:38 PM
To: Sheehan, Bill J <Bill.J.Sheehan@maine.gov>
Cc: Mohlar, Robert C <Robert.C.Mohlar@maine.gov>
Subject: RE: ski area snowmaking water needs

Bill,

Attached are flow criteria worksheets for three water withdrawal locations at NMDC's BigRock Ski Area: one for the unnamed brook at the existing snowmaking ponds, one for the same brook where it crosses East Blaine Road, and one for Boynton Brook where it crosses East Blaine Road (see the maps on the flow criteria sheets). NMDC's letter indicates a water need of 18.0 million gallons (55.2 acre-feet). Here are the estimated water volumes that could be captured annually at these withdrawal locations for storage in the snowmaking ponds:

WATER RESOURCE	WITHDRAWAL LOCATION	WATER POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE FOR CAPTURE & STORAGE ANNUALLY			
Unnamed Brook (≂along Trail 1 9/27 & Graves Rd.)	at existing snowmaking ponds	15.6 million gallons			
Unnamed Brook (≂along Trail 19/27 & Graves Rd.)	at East Blaine Road	28.3 million gallons			
Boynton Brook	at East Blaine Road	118.6 million gallons			

These potential volumes do not account for water losses due to pond leakage and surface evaporation. The potential volumes are based on median and mean stream flow estimates using USGS regression equations. Unfortunately, the drainage areas for the unnamed brook and Boynton Brook are well outside the range for which the equations were developed; thus, the potential errors in the flow estimates may be substantial. I would expect that the unnamed brook would be unreliable as a water source and, so, some significant withdrawals from Boynton Brook would be necessary most years.

Art

-----Original Message-----From: Mohlar, Robert C <<u>Robert.C.Mohlar@maine.gov</u>> Sent: Friday, December 03, 2021 2:03 PM To: Mcglauflin, Arthur T <<u>Arthur.T.Mcglauflin@maine.gov</u>> Subject: FW: ski area snowmaking water needs

Can you give this a look for Bill please?

Rob

-----Original Message-----From: Sheehan, Bill J <Bill.J.Sheehan@maine.gov> Sent: Friday, December 03, 2021 1:49 PM To: Mohlar, Robert C <Robert.C.Mohlar@maine.gov> Cc: Belair, Scott <Scott.Belair@maine.gov> Subject: ski area snowmaking water needs

Hi Rob,

Mars Hill ski area is proposing a few upgrades including improvements to their snowmaking capacity. They've sent me the attached summary of the proposal.

Can you or Art take a quick look at this for potential problems with 567 before our meeting on Wednesday? I suspect the current snowmaking ponds are currently inadequate for their proposed needs (~18 Million gallons/season).

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Thanks and have a good weekend!

Bill PS (Snowing here for the fourth day in a row)

-----Original Message-----From: kyocera@maine.gov <kyocera@maine.gov> Sent: Friday, December 3, 2021 1:38 PM To: Sheehan, Bill J <Bill.J.Sheehan@maine.gov> Subject:

------TASKalfa 4053ci [00:17:c8:8c:17:87] ------

STATE OF MAINE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION





December 27, 2021

Northern Maine Development Commission 11 West Presque Isle Road P.O. Box 779 Caribou, Maine 04736

RE: Big Rock Mountain

Dear Mr. Kamm:

The Department has preliminarily reviewed the work proposed at Big Rock Mountain. The proposed work would require a Natural Resource Protection Act permit and a Site Location Act of Development Amendment. Some of the work may be able to be completed under 38 MRSA §488 (26) Exemption for existing ski area facilities, but any impacts requiring a Natural Resources Protection Act permit would not qualify for this exemption.

If you have any questions, please call me at 446-1216 or send me an e-mail message at jessica.damon@maine.gov.

Sincerely,

Jessica M. Damon

Jerrich Demon

Licensing Manager Eastern Maine Regional Office Maine Department of Environmental Protection

AUGUSTA 17 STATE HOUSE STATION AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0017 (207) 287-7688 FAX: (207) 287-7826 BANGOR 106 HOGAN ROAD, SUITE 6 BANGOR, MAINE 04401 (207) 941-4570 FAX: (207) 941-4584 PORTLAND 312 CANCO ROAD PORTLAND, MAINE 04103 (207) 822-6300 FAX: (207) 822-6303 PRESQUE ISLE 1235 CENTRAL DRIVE, SKYWAY PARK PRESQUE ISLE, MAINE 04769 (207) 764-0477 FAX: (207) 760-3143



November 23, 2021

Wende Mahaney US Fish and Wildlife Service PO Box A 306 Hatchery Road East Orland, ME 04431

Dear Ms. Mahaney:

Big Rock will be submitting a grant application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to replace a 50-year-old ski lift with a new top to bottom lift, expand snowmaking capability to extend the ski season at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill. Based upon an average requirement for 3 feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snowmaking, the total water requirement to cover all snowmaking terrain amounts to nearly 18 million gallons of water. Snowmaking water is currently drawn from four snowmaking ponds above the base area, which have an aggregate storage capacity of about 1 million gallons. Water storage in the four ponds is augmented by surface water collected from a nearby stream. Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is assisting Big Rock with the submission of this application.

One of the requirements Big Rock must fulfill is to ensure the funding agency that the proposed work will be in compliance with the Federal Endangered Species Act. Your written comments concerning any effect this project may have on endangered and/or threatened species are necessary

A project description and site maps are enclosed for your review. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 493-5757 or <u>jkamm@nmdc.org</u>

Sincerely,

Kamm.

Senior Planner



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency

Jay Kamm

From:	Pauley, Nicole M <nicole_pauley@fws.gov> on behalf of Maine Field Office, FW5 <mainefieldoffice@fws.gov></mainefieldoffice@fws.gov></nicole_pauley@fws.gov>
Sent:	Thursday, December 9, 2021 12:05 PM
То:	Jay Kamm
Cc:	Mahaney, Wende
Subject:	Request from NMDC Regarding Big Rock Mountain Expansion, Mars Hill



This email is in response to your November 23, 2021 letter (received at our office December 7, 2021) regarding the proposed expansion project at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill, Maine.

At this time, we do not have any comments on the proposed project. However, we advise that you coordinate with your federal action agency, the Economic Development Administration, and utilize the Service's Information for Planning and Consultation tool (IPaC; <u>https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/</u>) to obtain an official species list for your project. This species list will identify the federally threatened, endangered, candidate, and proposed species and designated or proposed critical habitat that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project or may be affected by your proposed project. The Maine Field Office website also includes a stepwise process to assist you in determining if your project may affect federally listed species or critical habitats for the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and bald eagles for the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (https://www.fws.gov/mainefieldoffice/Project%20reviews.html). Please keep in mind it is ultimately the responsibility of the lead federal action agency to make effects determinations under section 7 of the ESA and then initiate consultation with the Service whenever a project may affect a listed species or critical habitat. Therefore, coordination with your action agency throughout this process is key. After you obtain a species list from IPaC and fill out the Species Summary Table found on the Maine Field Office website, we are happy to engage in conversations regarding the ESA and determinations of effects to listed species and critical habitat.

In the future, please submit all requests for project reviews electronically (including requests for section 7 consultations) to our general office email address at mainefieldoffice@fws.gov. This is a fairly new process for us, and we are still working to get the word out to all our partners. Thank you for contacting our office and please let us know if you have any questions.

Thank you, MEFO team

IPaC resource list

This report is an automatically generated list of species and other resources such as critical habitat (collectively referred to as *trust resources*) under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) jurisdiction that are known or expected to be on or near the project area referenced below. The list may also include trust resources that occur outside of the project area, but that could potentially be directly or indirectly affected by activities in the project area. However, determining the likelihood and extent of effects a project may have on trust resources typically requires gathering additional site-specific (e.g., vegetation/species surveys) and project-specific (e.g., magnitude and timing of proposed activities) information.

Below is a summary of the project information you provided and contact information for the USFWS office(s) with jurisdiction in the defined project area. Please read the introduction to each section that follows (Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, USFWS Facilities, and NWI Wetlands) for additional information applicable to the trust resources addressed in that section.

Location

Aroostook County, Maine



Local office

Maine Ecological Services Field Office

<a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><a><

MAILING ADDRESS P. O. Box A East Orland, ME 04431

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

TEORCONSULTATIO

306 Hatchery Road East Orland, ME 04431

http://www.fws.gov/mainefieldoffice/index.html

Endangered species

This resource list is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an analysis of project level impacts.

The primary information used to generate this list is the known or expected range of each species. Additional areas of influence (AOI) for species are also considered. An AOI includes areas outside of the species range if the species could be indirectly affected by activities in that area (e.g., placing a dam upstream of a fish population even if that fish does not occur at the dam site, may indirectly impact the species by reducing or eliminating water flow downstream). Because species can move, and site conditions can change, the species on this list are not guaranteed to be found on or near the project area. To fully determine any potential effects to species, additional site-specific and project-specific information is often required.

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act **requires** Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of such proposed action" for any project that is conducted, permitted, funded, or licensed by any Federal agency. A letter from the local office and a species list which fulfills this requirement can **only** be obtained by requesting an official species list from either the Regulatory Review section in IPaC (see directions below) or from the local field office directly.

For project evaluations that require USFWS concurrence/review, please return to the IPaC website and request an official species list by doing the following:

- 1. Draw the project location and click CONTINUE.
- 2. Click DEFINE PROJECT.
- 3. Log in (if directed to do so).
- 4. Provide a name and description for your project.
- 5. Click REQUEST SPECIES LIST.

Listed species¹ and their critical habitats are managed by the <u>Ecological Services Program</u> of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the fisheries division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Fisheries²).

Species and critical habitats under the sole responsibility of NOAA Fisheries are **not** shown on this list. Please contact <u>NOAA Fisheries</u> for <u>species under their jurisdiction</u>.

- 1. Species listed under the <u>Endangered Species Act</u> are threatened or endangered; IPaC also shows species that are candidates, or proposed, for listing. See the <u>listing status page</u> for more information. IPaC only shows species that are regulated by USFWS (see FAQ).
- 2. <u>NOAA Fisheries</u>, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

The following species are potentially affected by activities in this location:

Mammals

0/21, 9:55 AM	IPaC: Explore Location resources
NAME	STATUS
Canada Lynx Lynx canadensis There is final critical habitat for this species. The locritical habitat is not available. <u>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/3652</u>	Threatened ocation of the
Northern Long-eared Bat Myotis septentrionali Wherever found No critical habitat has been designated for this sp https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045	s Threatened ecies.
nsects	
NAME	STATUS
Monarch Butterfly Danaus plexippus Wherever found	Candidate

Critical habitats

https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9743

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

Potential effects to critical habitat(s) in this location must be analyzed along with the endangered species themselves.

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS AT THIS LOCATION.

Migratory birds

12/1

Certain birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act¹ and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act².

Any person or organization who plans or conducts activities that may result in impacts to migratory birds, eagles, and their habitats should follow appropriate regulations and consider implementing appropriate conservation measures, as described <u>below</u>.

- 1. The Migratory Birds Treaty Act of 1918.
- 2. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940.

Additional information can be found using the following links:

- Birds of Conservation Concern <u>http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/managed-species/</u> <u>birds-of-conservation-concern.php</u>
- Measures for avoiding and minimizing impacts to birds <u>http://www.fws.gov/birds/management/project-assessment-tools-and-guidance/</u>

conservation-measures.php

 Nationwide conservation measures for birds <u>http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/management/nationwidestandardconservationmeasures.pdf</u>

The birds listed below are birds of particular concern either because they occur on the <u>USFWS Birds</u> of <u>Conservation Concern</u> (BCC) list or warrant special attention in your project location. To learn more about the levels of concern for birds on your list and how this list is generated, see the FAQ <u>below</u>. This is not a list of every bird you may find in this location, nor a guarantee that every bird on this list will be found in your project area. To see exact locations of where birders and the general public have sighted birds in and around your project area, visit the <u>E-bird data mapping tool</u> (Tip: enter your location, desired date range and a species on your list). For projects that occur off the Atlantic Coast, additional maps and models detailing the relative occurrence and abundance of bird species on your list are available. Links to additional information about Atlantic Coast birds, and other important information about your migratory bird list, including how to properly interpret and use your migratory bird report, can be found <u>below</u>.

For guidance on when to schedule activities or implement avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to migratory birds on your list, click on the PROBABILITY OF PRESENCE SUMMARY at the top of your list to see when these birds are most likely to be present and breeding in your project area.

CC

NAME

Bald Eagle Haliaeetus leucocephalus

This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities.

https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1626

Evening Grosbeak Coccothraustes vespertinus This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. BREEDING SEASON (IF A BREEDING SEASON IS INDICATED FOR A BIRD ON YOUR LIST, THE BIRD MAY BREED IN YOUR PROJECT AREA SOMETIME WITHIN THE TIMEFRAME SPECIFIED, WHICH IS A VERY LIBERAL ESTIMATE OF THE DATES INSIDE WHICH THE BIRD BREEDS ACROSS ITS ENTIRE RANGE. "BREEDS ELSEWHERE" INDICATES THAT THE BIRD DOES NOT LIKELY BREED IN YOUR PROJECT AREA.)

Breeds Dec 1 to Aug 31

Breeds May 15 to Aug 10

Breeds elsewhere

Lesser Yellowlegs Tringa flavipes This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska. <u>https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9679</u>

Probability of Presence Summary

The graphs below provide our best understanding of when birds of concern are most likely to be present in your project area. This information can be used to tailor and schedule your project activities to avoid or minimize impacts to birds. Please make sure you read and understand the FAQ "Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report" before using or attempting to interpret this report.

Probability of Presence (

Each green bar represents the bird's relative probability of presence in the 10km grid cell(s) your project overlaps during a particular week of the year. (A year is represented as 12 4-week months.) A taller bar indicates a higher probability of species presence. The survey effort (see below) can be used to establish a level of confidence in the presence score. One can have higher confidence in the presence score if the corresponding survey effort is also high.

How is the probability of presence score calculated? The calculation is done in three steps:

- 1. The probability of presence for each week is calculated as the number of survey events in the week where the species was detected divided by the total number of survey events for that week. For example, if in week 12 there were 20 survey events and the Spotted Towhee was found in 5 of them, the probability of presence of the Spotted Towhee in week 12 is 0.25.
- 2. To properly present the pattern of presence across the year, the relative probability of presence is calculated. This is the probability of presence divided by the maximum probability of presence across all weeks. For example, imagine the probability of presence in week 20 for the Spotted Towhee is 0.05, and that the probability of presence at week 12 (0.25) is the maximum of any week of the year. The relative probability of presence on week 12 is 0.25/0.25 = 1; at week 20 it is 0.05/0.25 = 0.2.
- 3. The relative probability of presence calculated in the previous step undergoes a statistical conversion so that all possible values fall between 0 and 10, inclusive. This is the probability of presence score.

To see a bar's probability of presence score, simply hover your mouse cursor over the bar.

Breeding Season (=)

Yellow bars denote a very liberal estimate of the time-frame inside which the bird breeds across its entire range. If there are no yellow bars shown for a bird, it does not breed in your project area.

Survey Effort ()

Vertical black lines superimposed on probability of presence bars indicate the number of surveys performed for that species in the 10km grid cell(s) your project area overlaps. The number of surveys is expressed as a range, for example, 33 to 64 surveys.

To see a bar's survey effort range, simply hover your mouse cursor over the bar.

No Data (--)

A week is marked as having no data if there were no survey events for that week.

Survey Timeframe

Surveys from only the last 10 years are used in order to ensure delivery of currently relevant information. The exception to this is areas off the Atlantic coast, where bird returns are based on all years of available data, since data in these areas is currently much more sparse.

				🔳 proba	bility of p	oresence	e 🧧 bre	eding se	eason	survey e	effort –	- no data
SPECIES	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Bald Eagle Non-BCC Vulnerable (This is not a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) in this area, but warrants attention because of the Eagle Act or for potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or				1	-1			••••	-11	+		<i>P</i>
activities.)					_	(1)	-					
Evening Grosbeak BCC Rangewide (CON) (This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its range in the continental USA and Alaska.)	5	í.	R	C		÷ +++-			-+	++++		
Lesser Yellowlegs BCC Rangewide (CON) (This is a Bird of Conservation Concern (BCC) throughout its								+ 1 - 1		+ → 1 +		
range in the continental USA and Alaska.)												

Tell me more about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds.

<u>Nationwide Conservation Measures</u> describes measures that can help avoid and minimize impacts to all birds at any location year round. Implementation of these measures is particularly important when birds are most likely to occur in the project area. When birds may be breeding in the area, identifying the locations of any active nests and avoiding their destruction is a very helpful impact minimization measure. To see when birds are most likely to occur and be breeding in your project area, view the Probability of Presence Summary. <u>Additional measures</u> or <u>permits</u> may be advisable depending on the type of activity you are conducting and the type of infrastructure or bird species present on your project site.

What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?

The Migratory Bird Resource List is comprised of USFWS <u>Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC)</u> and other species that may warrant special attention in your project location.

The migratory bird list generated for your project is derived from data provided by the <u>Avian Knowledge Network</u> (<u>AKN</u>). The AKN data is based on a growing collection of <u>survey</u>, <u>banding</u>, <u>and citizen science datasets</u> and is queried and filtered to return a list of those birds reported as occurring in the 10km grid cell(s) which your project intersects, and that have been identified as warranting special attention because they are a BCC species in that area, an eagle (<u>Eagle Act</u> requirements may apply), or a species that has a particular vulnerability to offshore activities or development.

Again, the Migratory Bird Resource list includes only a subset of birds that may occur in your project area. It is not representative of all birds that may occur in your project area. To get a list of all birds potentially present in your project area, please visit the <u>AKN Phenology Tool</u>.

What does IPaC use to generate the probability of presence graphs for the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location?

The probability of presence graphs associated with your migratory bird list are based on data provided by the <u>Avian Knowledge Network (AKN)</u>. This data is derived from a growing collection of <u>survey, banding, and citizen</u> <u>science datasets</u>.

Probability of presence data is continuously being updated as new and better information becomes available. To learn more about how the probability of presence graphs are produced and how to interpret them, go the Probability of Presence Summary and then click on the "Tell me about these graphs" link.

How do I know if a bird is breeding, wintering, migrating or present year-round in my project area?

To see what part of a particular bird's range your project area falls within (i.e. breeding, wintering, migrating or year-round), you may refer to the following resources: <u>The Cornell Lab of Ornithology All About Birds Bird Guide</u>, or (if you are unsuccessful in locating the bird of interest there), the <u>Cornell Lab of Ornithology Neotropical Birds</u> <u>guide</u>. If a bird on your migratory bird species list has a breeding season associated with it, if that bird does occur in your project area, there may be nests present at some point within the timeframe specified. If "Breeds elsewhere" is indicated, then the bird likely does not breed in your project area.

What are the levels of concern for migratory birds?

Migratory birds delivered through IPaC fall into the following distinct categories of concern:

- 1. "BCC Rangewide" birds are <u>Birds of Conservation Concern</u> (BCC) that are of concern throughout their range anywhere within the USA (including Hawaii, the Pacific Islands, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands);
- 2. "BCC BCR" birds are BCCs that are of concern only in particular Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs) in the continental USA; and
- 3. "Non-BCC Vulnerable" birds are not BCC species in your project area, but appear on your list either because of the <u>Eagle Act</u> requirements (for eagles) or (for non-eagles) potential susceptibilities in offshore areas from certain types of development or activities (e.g. offshore energy development or longline fishing).

Although it is important to try to avoid and minimize impacts to all birds, efforts should be made, in particular, to avoid and minimize impacts to the birds on this list, especially eagles and BCC species of rangewide concern. For more information on conservation measures you can implement to help avoid and minimize migratory bird impacts and requirements for eagles, please see the FAQs for these topics.

Details about birds that are potentially affected by offshore projects

For additional details about the relative occurrence and abundance of both individual bird species and groups of bird species within your project area off the Atlantic Coast, please visit the <u>Northeast Ocean Data Portal</u>. The Portal also offers data and information about other taxa besides birds that may be helpful to you in your project review. Alternately, you may download the bird model results files underlying the portal maps through the <u>NOAA NCCOS</u> <u>Integrative Statistical Modeling and Predictive Mapping of Marine Bird Distributions and Abundance on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf</u> project webpage.

Bird tracking data can also provide additional details about occurrence and habitat use throughout the year, including migration. Models relying on survey data may not include this information. For additional information on marine bird tracking data, see the <u>Diving Bird Study</u> and the <u>nanotag studies</u> or contact <u>Caleb Spiegel</u> or <u>Pam</u> Loring.

What if I have eagles on my list?

If your project has the potential to disturb or kill eagles, you may need to <u>obtain a permit</u> to avoid violating the Eagle Act should such impacts occur.

Proper Interpretation and Use of Your Migratory Bird Report

The migratory bird list generated is not a list of all birds in your project area, only a subset of birds of priority concern. To learn more about how your list is generated, and see options for identifying what other birds may be in your project area, please see the FAQ "What does IPaC use to generate the migratory birds potentially occurring in my specified location". Please be aware this report provides the "probability of presence" of birds within the 10 km grid cell(s) that overlap your project; not your exact project footprint. On the graphs provided, please also look carefully at the survey effort (indicated by the black vertical bar) and for the existence of the "no data" indicator (a red horizontal bar). A high survey effort is the key component. If the survey effort is high, then the probability of presence score can be viewed as more dependable. In contrast, a low survey effort bar or no data bar means a lack of data and, therefore, a lack of certainty about presence of the species. This list is not perfect; it is simply a starting point for identifying what birds of concern have the potential to be in your project area, when they might be there, and if they might be breeding (which means nests might be present). The list helps you know what to look for to confirm presence, and helps guide you in knowing when to implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts from your project activities, should presence be confirmed. To learn more about conservation measures, visit the FAQ "Tell me about conservation measures I can implement to avoid or minimize impacts to migratory birds" at the bottom of your migratory bird trust resources page.

Facilities

National Wildlife Refuge lands

Any activity proposed on lands managed by the <u>National Wildlife Refuge</u> system must undergo a 'Compatibility Determination' conducted by the Refuge. Please contact the individual Refuges to discuss any questions or concerns.

THERE ARE NO REFUGE LANDS AT THIS LOCATION.

Fish hatcheries

THERE ARE NO FISH HATCHERIES AT THIS LOCATION.

Wetlands in the National Wetlands Inventory

Impacts to <u>NWI wetlands</u> and other aquatic habitats may be subject to regulation under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, or other State/Federal statutes.

For more information please contact the Regulatory Program of the local <u>U.S. Army Corps of</u> <u>Engineers District</u>.

WETLAND INFORMATION IS NOT AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME

This can happen when the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) map service is unavailable, or for very large projects that intersect many wetland areas. Try again, or visit the <u>NWI map</u> to view wetlands at this location.

Data limitations

The Service's objective of mapping wetlands and deepwater habitats is to produce reconnaissance level information on the location, type and size of these resources. The maps are prepared from the analysis of high altitude imagery. Wetlands are identified based on vegetation, visible hydrology and geography. A margin of error is inherent in the use of imagery; thus, detailed on-the-ground inspection of any particular site may result in revision of the wetland boundaries or classification established through image analysis.

The accuracy of image interpretation depends on the quality of the imagery, the experience of the image analysts, the amount and quality of the collateral data and the amount of ground truth verification work conducted. Metadata should be consulted to determine the date of the source imagery used and any mapping problems.

Wetlands or other mapped features may have changed since the date of the imagery or field work. There may be occasional differences in polygon boundaries or classifications between the information depicted on the map and the actual conditions on site.

Data exclusions

Certain wetland habitats are excluded from the National mapping program because of the limitations of aerial imagery as the primary data source used to detect wetlands. These habitats include seagrasses or submerged aquatic vegetation that are found in the intertidal and subtidal zones of estuaries and nearshore coastal waters.

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Some deepwater reef communities (coral or tuberficid worm reefs) have also been excluded from the inventory. These habitats, because of their depth, go undetected by aerial imagery.

Data precautions

Federal, state, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands in a different manner than that used in this inventory. There is no attempt, in either the design or products of this inventory, to define the limits of proprietary jurisdiction of any Federal, state, or local government or to establish the geographical scope of the regulatory programs of government agencies. Persons intending to engage in activities involving modifications within or adjacent to wetland areas should seek the advice of appropriate federal, state, or local agencies concerning specified agency regulatory programs and proprietary jurisdictions that may affect such activities.

RCO



November 24, 2021

Shawn Haskell Regional Wildlife Biologist Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife PO Box 447 Ashland, ME 04732

Dear Mr.; Haskell:

Big Rock will be submitting a grant application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to replace a 50-year-old ski lift with a new top to bottom lift, expand snowmaking capability to extend the ski season at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill. Based upon an average requirement for 3 feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snowmaking, the total water requirement to cover all snowmaking terrain amounts to nearly 18 million gallons of water. Snowmaking water is currently drawn from four snowmaking ponds above the base area, which have an aggregate storage capacity of about 1 million gallons. Water storage in the four ponds is augmented by surface water collected from a nearby stream. Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is assisting Big Rock with the submission of this application.

One of the requirements Big Rock must fulfill is to ensure the funding agency that the proposed work will be in compliance with the Federal Endangered Species Act. Your written comments concerning any effect this project may have on endangered and/or threatened species are necessary

A project description and site maps are enclosed for your review. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 493-5757 or <u>jkamm@nmdc.org</u>

Sincerely,

Jay^vKamm, Senior Planner



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency

Jay Kamm

From: Sent: To: Subject: Haskell, Shawn <Shawn.Haskell@maine.gov> Wednesday, December 8, 2021 11:42 AM Jay Kamm Big Rock proposal



Jay, I've received your paperwork regarding proposed upgrades to the Big Rock downhill ski facility in Mars Hill, ME. Installation of a new chairlift will be in an existing cleared ski trail, so should cause no adverse impacts to Statelisted bats, or other wildlife. Proposed improvements to snow-making equipment appear to be of similar impact. Let me know if there is anything else you need from me. Shawn 592-4446 (cell)

Shawn P. Haskell Regional Wildlife Biologist Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Ashland Regional Headquarters P.O. Box 447 Ashland, Maine 04732-0447 207-435-3231 ext. 86872

Correspondence to and from this office is considered a public record and may be subject to a request under the Maine Freedom of Access Act. Information that you wish to keep confidential should not be included in email correspondence.



November 23, 2021

Nathan Saunders, P.E. Division of Environmental and Community Health Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention 11 State House Station Augusta, ME 04333-0011

Dear Mr. Saunders:

Big Rock will be submitting a grant application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to replace a 50-year-old ski lift with a new top to bottom lift, expand snowmaking capability to extend the ski season at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill. Based upon an average requirement for 3 feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snowmaking, the total water requirement to cover all snowmaking terrain amounts to nearly 18 million gallons of water. Snowmaking water is currently drawn from four snowmaking ponds above the base area, which have an aggregate storage capacity of about 1 million gallons. Water storage in the four ponds is augmented by surface water collected from a nearby stream. Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is assisting Big Rock with the submission of this application.

One of the requirements Big Rock must fulfill is to ensure the funding agency that the proposed work will be in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act. Your written comments concerning any effect this project may have on the public water supply source protection program are necessary

A project description and site maps are enclosed for your review. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 493-5757 or jkamm@nmdc.org

Sincerely,

Jay Kamm, Senior Planner



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency



November 23, 2021

Tony Jenkins State Resource Conservationist USDA-NRCS 967 Illinois Avenue, Suite #3 Bangor, ME 04401

Dear Mr. Jenkins:

Big Rock will be submitting a grant application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to replace a 50-year-old ski lift with a new top to bottom lift, expand snowmaking capability to extend the ski season at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill. Based upon an average requirement for 3 feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snowmaking, the total water requirement to cover all snowmaking terrain amounts to nearly 18 million gallons of water. Snowmaking water is currently drawn from four snowmaking ponds above the base area, which have an aggregate storage capacity of about 1 million gallons. Water storage in the four ponds is augmented by surface water collected from a nearby stream. Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is assisting Big Rock with the submission of this application.

One of the requirements Big Rock must fulfill is to ensure the funding agency that the proposed work will be in compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act. Your written comments concerning any effect this project may have on farmlands are necessary

A project description and site maps are enclosed for your review. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 493-5757 or jkamm@nmdc.org

Sincerely,

Jay Kamm, Senior Planner



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency



November 24, 2021

Edward Peter-Paul Tribal Chief Aroostook Band of MicMacs 8 Northern Road Presque Isle, ME 04769

Dear Chief Peter-Paul:

Big Rock will be submitting a grant application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to replace a 50-year-old ski lift with a new top to bottom lift, expand snowmaking capability to extend the ski season at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill. Based upon an average requirement for 3 feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snowmaking, the total water requirement to cover all snowmaking terrain amounts to nearly 18 million gallons of water. Snowmaking water is currently drawn from four snowmaking ponds above the base area, which have an aggregate storage capacity of about 1 million gallons. Water storage in the four ponds is augmented by surface water collected from a nearby stream. Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is assisting Big Rock with the submission of this application.

One of the requirements Big Rock must fulfill is to ensure the funding agency that the proposed work will not adversely affect tribal lands. Your written comments concerning any effect this project may have tribal lands is necessary

A project description and site maps are enclosed for your review. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 493-5757 or jkamm@nmdc.org

Sincerely.

Jay Kamm, Senior Planner



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency



November 24, 2021

Clarissa Sabattis Tribal Chief Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians 88 Bell Road Littleton, ME 04730

Dear Chief Sabattis:

Big Rock will be submitting a grant application to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to replace a 50-year-old ski lift with a new top to bottom lift, expand snowmaking capability to extend the ski season at Big Rock Mountain in Mars Hill. Based upon an average requirement for 3 feet of machine-made snow on trails covered with snowmaking, the total water requirement to cover all snowmaking terrain amounts to nearly 18 million gallons of water. Snowmaking water is currently drawn from four snowmaking ponds above the base area, which have an aggregate storage capacity of about 1 million gallons. Water storage in the four ponds is augmented by surface water collected from a nearby stream. Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) is assisting Big Rock with the submission of this application.

One of the requirements Big Rock must fulfill is to ensure the funding agency that the proposed work will not adversely affect tribal lands. Your written comments concerning any effect this project may have tribal lands is necessary

A project description and site maps are enclosed for your review. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 493-5757 or <u>jkamm@nmdc.org</u>

Sincerely.

Jay Kamm, Senior Planner



Equal Opportunity Lender/Agency