



NEW HAMPSHIRE NATURAL HERITAGE BUREAU

DRED - DIVISION OF FORESTS & LANDS

PO Box 1856 -- 172 PEMBROKE ROAD, CONCORD, NH 03302-1856

(603) 271-2214

To: Site Evaluation Committee

From: Melissa Coppola, Environmental Information Specialist

Date: July 23, 2010

Subject: Progress Report: Site Evaluation Committee # 2010-01
Application for Groton Wind, LLC

The Natural Heritage Bureau (NHB), under the auspices of the NH Native Plant Protection Act of 1987 (RSA 217-A), has reviewed the application materials for Groton Wind, LLC. Based on the information provided in the application, it is difficult to fully assess the potential for impacts to rare plants and exemplary natural communities. NHB has requested a site visit to survey for rare plant species.

The applicant contacted NHB for a standard database check for known locations of rare species and exemplary natural communities on 24 June 2009 (NHB09-1212). There were no known records of rare plant or exemplary natural communities documented in the vicinity of the project at that time. However, like much of the state, this area has not been surveyed for rare plant species, so a negative result (no record in the NHB database) does not mean that a sensitive species is not present. All of our review memos explain this limitation, and state that an on-site survey would provide better information on what species and communities are present. All other wind projects have taken this extra step.

NHB database checks are only valid for one year, because new data is always being entered. There is a new database record (historical documentation) for a state-threatened plant species near the border of the property and Crosby Mountain State Park. Based on landscape analysis, there is potential habitat for this species along the eastern slopes of Fletcher Mtn. Although much of the property has been heavily managed, inoperable steep slopes may provide areas of intact habitat.

NHB has a planned site visit for 29 July 2010 to search for rare plant species near the west access road and west ridge area (Fletcher Mtn). If any rare plant species are found, NHB will provide the applicant with recommendations on how to avoid, minimize or mitigate for potential impacts and a copy of the recommendations will be provided to the SEC.