


*Received by
Administrator via e-mail
on 2/12/19* 

MEMORANDUM

To: Sarah Allen
From: Sarah Barnum
Date: February 22, 2019
Re: **SRP Raptor Nest Survey - Helicopter Results**

As describe in a memo dated February 7, 2019, a two-step survey will be used to identify raptor nests present in the vicinity of the Seacoast Reliability Project (SRP) corridor, if any, consisting of an initial helicopter survey, followed by a foot survey. The purpose of the helicopter portion of the survey is to identify existing nests from the previous nesting season. Locations with existing nests would then be targeted for survey by foot during the active nesting season, as nests may be reused, or returning raptor pairs may place new nests in nearby suitable locations.

The helicopter portion of the survey was conducted on February 19, 2019, with flight service proved by JBI Helicopter Services. The survey was conducted from approximately 10:15 to 11:30 am, under sunny skies with unlimited visibility and northwest winds at ~15 mph with gusts to 22 mph. The survey crew consisted of two observers and the pilot, the observers scanned from the left side of the aircraft while the pilot flew at a consistent speed and height along the SRP corridor. The average flight speed during the survey was approximately 35 knots/hour and the average height above the trees was 80-100 ft. The pilot hovered or circled the aircraft as requested by the observers to provide extra viewing of features of interest.

The survey began at the Madbury substation, then followed the SRP corridor south and east to the Portsmouth substation where the aircraft turned around and retraced the SRP route. During the first pass, the observers scanned the eastern/northern tree-line of the cleared SRP ROW, from the forest edge to about 100 ft into the forest. On the return trip, the western/southern tree-line was observed in the same manner. The ground was snow covered, and contrast between the snow and the hardwood trees provided excellent viewing of these trees, while the angle of the sun created minimal shadows, which provided good viewing into the crowns of white pine trees. Squirrel nests, identified by their leafy construction, were plainly visible in both the branches and crotches of hardwood trees.

No raptor nests were observed.