

**Jeff Spinney – Boat ramp and dock system, Alna
DEP #L-28397-4E-A-N, site visit notes**

126 Golden Ridge Road, Alna

Site visit made 9/6/2019 at 9am

Low tide: 11:30am

Department staff: Jami MacNeil

Others on site: Jeff Spinney (applicant)

Summary:

Large parcel with existing residential structure far back from water. Eastern edge of parcel abuts Sheepscot River. Parcel contains a few open fields but is largely forested. An unimproved road just wide enough for a truck leads down to the river, where there is an existing fire pit. The area is used for boat launching by several members of a local snowmobile club. The existing launch area is about 20 feet wide. The substrate is muddy. To either side the shoreline is vegetated with trees; there is tidal marsh grass at either side of the launch.

The applicant proposes to install a permanent piling structure at the shoreline to which he will attached a seasonal ramp and float. He also proposes to install a concrete-plank boat ramp (first re-grading the existing launch area). No tree removal is proposed. The alternative launch locations require additional road and clearing disturbance. The project area is already clear of marsh grass. The seasonal ramp may result in some shading of marsh grass but only on the outer fringe of the grass area.

The applicant will regrade the shoreline prior to installing the concrete planks and will remove the excavated material to an upland location (open field a few hundred feet from the river).

Construction access will be over land. The float and ramp will be stored in the upland during the off season.



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Spinney NRPA Application (#L-28397-4E-A-N), site visit 9/6/2019
Golden Ridge Road, Alna, ME





MEMORANDUM**Maine Natural Areas Program**

Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
State House Station #177, Augusta, Maine 04333

Date: October 4, 2019

To: Jami MacNeil, DEP

From: Kristen Puryear, Ecologist

Re: Rare and exemplary botanical features, L-28397-4E-A-N, Spinney Boat Ramp and Pier System, Alna, Maine.

I have searched the Maine Natural Areas Program's Biological and Conservation Data System files for rare or unique botanical features in the vicinity of the proposed site in response to your request received October 3, 2014 for our agency's comments on the project.

According to our current information, there is a rare plant (Horned Pondweed) and wetland type (Mixed Saltmarsh) near the project area. The project itself does not immediately impact either of these features. However, all measures to prevent downstream siltation during construction and installation of the permanent pilings should be employed to avoid impacts to the Mixed Saltmarsh and the species that depend on it. Please refer to the table below and attached map and factsheets for more information about these features.

Feature	State Status	State Rank	Global Rank	Occurrence Rank	Notes
Mixed Saltmarsh <i>Mixed graminoid-forb saltmarsh</i>	N/A	S3	G5	BC Good-Fair	Dyer & Sheepscot River Marshes
Horned Pondweed <i>Zanichellia palustris</i>	SC	S2	G5	H Historical	Alna Center Tidal Marsh

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. You may want to have the site inventoried by a qualified field biologist to ensure that no undocumented rare features are inadvertently harmed.

The Maine Natural Areas Program is continuously working to achieve a more comprehensive database of exemplary natural features in Maine. We welcome the contribution of any information collected if a site survey is performed.

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

Spinney Boat Ramp & Pier System Alna, Maine

- ★ Approximate Project Location
- Approximate Property Location
- Rare Plant
- Rare/Exemplary Natural Community/Ecosystem
- ⋯ Town

0 0.1 0.2 Miles

Maine Natural Areas Program, October 2019



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Mixed Saltmarsh

Mixed Saltmarsh

Horned Pondweed

Newcastle

Alna

Mixed Saltmarsh

Mixed Saltmarsh

Mixed Saltmarsh

Mixed Saltmarsh

Mixed Saltmarsh

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State Rank S3

Community Description

These saltmarshes contain a mixture of graminoids and forbs, sometimes with patches of saltmarsh cordgrasses, but saltmeadow cordgrass is not strongly dominant. Chair-maker's rush is almost always present, at least in small amounts. Dominants can vary, but indicator species include creeping bentgrass, freshwater cordgrass, sea lavender, wire rush, saltmarsh bulrush, New England aster, saltmarsh sedge, and narrow-leaved cattail. Sweetgrass is often present, though not abundant. The vegetation occurs as a mosaic of dominants and lacks the strong zonation typical of the larger *Spartina* Saltmarshes.

Soil and Site Characteristics

These are often fringe marshes in sheltered coastal pockets, estuaries, and tidal creeks; not typically covering large acreages although they may be strung along a fairly long stretch of shoreline. They often occur along tidal creeks, or as a shoreline fringe in coves. Vegetation consists predominantly of low marsh species (saltmarsh regularly inundated twice daily by tides).

Diagnostics

These are tidal marshes in which various saltmarsh plants share dominance with



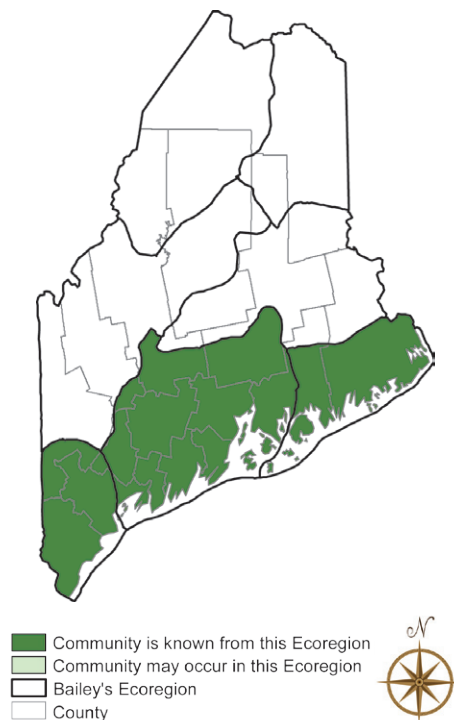
Saltmarsh Bulrush

cordgrasses and/or black-grass; chair-maker's rush is typically present and may be dominant; saltmarsh sedge is also characteristic. Vegetation tends to be patchy rather than zoned.

Similar Types

Spartina Saltmarshes have many of the same species, but have much greater relative cover of saltmeadow cordgrass, smooth cordgrass, and black-grass. They also appear more uniform, and tend to occur at the outer reaches of estuaries (back-barrier marshes and finger marshes). Brackish Tidal Marshes also share many species, but lack the saltmarsh cordgrasses and other strictly saltmarsh species (black-grass, saltmarsh bulrush, saltmarsh false-foxglove, sea lavender, etc.).

Location Map



Mixed Graminoid - Forb Saltmarsh

Conservation, Wildlife, and Management Considerations

Saltmarshes have received considerable conservation attention. Many occur on public lands or private conservation lands, only a few of which are listed. With development of the uplands that border these marshes, maintenance of appropriate wetland buffers can help reduce degradation that could result from adjacent land uses.

Saltmarshes are important nesting habitat for Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrow, seaside sparrow, and the rare saltmarsh sharp-tailed sparrow. These wetlands also provide foraging habitat for a large number of wading birds and shorebirds, including the rare least tern. The big bluet, a rare damselfly, inhabits saltmarsh ponds with emergent vegetation in southern Maine.

Distribution

Coastwide; almost all of the east coastal Maine saltmarshes contain this type. Extends eastward into the Canadian Maritimes (Laurentian Mixed Forest Province) and westward into New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

Landscape Pattern: Small Patch

Characteristic Plants

These plants are frequently found in this community type. Those with an asterisk are often diagnostic of this community.

Herb

Alkali bulrush*
Black-grass*
Chaffy sedge*
Chair-maker's rush*
Common arrow-grass
Creeping bentgrass*
Freshwater cordgrass
New York aster*
Salt-loving spikerush*
Saltmeadow cordgrass*
Wire rush*

Associated Rare Plants

Gaspé arrow-grass
Marsh-elder
Saltmarsh false-foxglove
Saltmarsh sedge
Small saltmarsh aster

Associated Rare Animals

Big bluet
Black-crowned night-heron
Laughing gull
Least tern
Saltmarsh sharp-tailed sparrow
Short-eared owl

Examples on Conservation Lands You Can Visit

- Cobscook Bay State Park - Washington Co.
- Great Wass Island Preserve - Washington Co.
- Petit Manan National Wildlife Refuge - Hancock Co.
- Reid State Park - Sagadahoc Co.
- Scarborough Marsh Wildlife Management Area - Cumberland Co.

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Maine Natural Areas Program

Zannichellia palustris L.

Horned Pondweed

- [State Rank](#): S2
- [Global Rank](#): G5
- [State Status](#): Special Concern

Habitat: Fresh, brackish, or alkaline waters and stream edges. [Tidal wetland (non-forested, wetland)]

Range: Newfoundland to Alaska, south throughout United States to Mexico. Also South America, Africa, Eurasia.



Aids to Identification: Horned pondweed is a submersed aquatic with slender, thread-like branches arising from a fragile rhizome. It can be distinguished from other pondweeds by its linear, opposite leaves and its distinctive fruits borne in the axils. The fruits are short, flattened, somewhat toothed along one edge and have a distinct beak (1-2 mm long) on the tip. In flower, the carpels have a distinctive, funnel-shaped stigma.

Ecological characteristics: Along our coast, horned pondweed grows on the mud at the lowest level of the intertidal zone where it is exposed only at full low tide and is subjected to higher salinities than most other estuarine species. It usually grows singly and is rare even within its few stations. A pH range of 6.5-7.2 and chloride range of 185-1200 mg/l has been reported for water where *Zannichellia* is found in New England.



Phenology: Fruits can be found July - October.

Family: Potamogetonaceae

Synonyms: *Zannichellia palustris* L. var. *major* (Hartman) Koch.

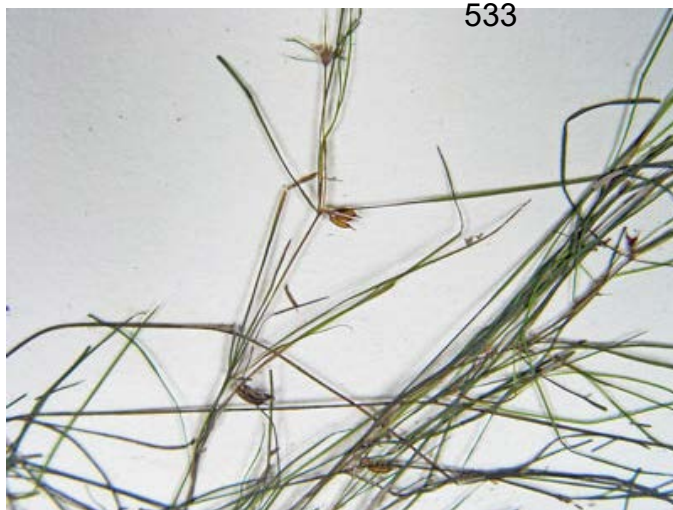
Known Distribution in Maine: This rare plant has been documented from a total of 15 town(s) in the following county(ies): Cumberland, Hancock, Knox, Lincoln, Penobscot, Sagadahoc, Waldo, York.

Reason(s) for rarity: Habitat is naturally scarce and in



some cases has been altered by human activities. Possibly overlooked.

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Conservation considerations: Prevent degradation of marsh and estuary habitat from adjacent land uses.

Credits



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Contact

Department of Agriculture,
Conservation and Forestry
22 State House Station
18 Elkins Lane
Augusta, ME 04333
More [Locations](#)

Phone: (207) 287-3200
Fax: (207) 287-2400
TTY Users Call Maine Relay
711
DACF@Maine.gov

MacNeil, Jami

From: Puryear, Kristen
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2020 10:50 AM
To: MacNeil, Jami
Cc: St.Hilaire, Lisa
Subject: RE: NRPA review request, Spinney boat ramp/dock, Alna

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hi Jami,

I think the proposed E&S measures look great and should be sufficient to protect the coastal wetland and rare plant.

Thank you for checking in.

--- *Kristen*

From: MacNeil, Jami <Jami.MacNeil@maine.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, January 08, 2020 11:14 AM
To: Puryear, Kristen <Kristen.Puryear@maine.gov>
Subject: RE: NRPA review request, Spinney boat ramp/dock, Alna

Hi Kristen,

If you recall, you provided me with comments a few months back on a proposed pier and boat ramp in Alna. In the memo, you recommended that the applicant should take "all measures" to prevent siltation. As I am writing the permit draft, the AAG would like clarification on what "all measures" means. Would you find the measures proposed in the application to be sufficient? Or were there any additional steps you would recommend?

The proposed E&S control measures include:

- silt screen around stockpiles if necessary
- turbidity curtain around work area
- work only during periods of low water
- equipment will operate on land or within the footprint of the proposed boat ramp, and will not otherwise operate within the coastal wetland
- hay/seed/mulch any disturbed soil in the upland

During the review, the applicant also agreed to wash all fine sediments off the stones that will be used to the construct the boat ramp.

Thanks,

-Jami MacNeil

Environmental Specialist III
 Bureau of Land Resources
 Maine Department of Environmental Protection
 (207) 446-4894 | jami.macneil@maine.gov

From: St.Hilaire, Lisa <Lisa.St.Hilaire@maine.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2019 4:45 PM
To: MacNeil, Jami <Jami.MacNeil@maine.gov>
Cc: Puryear, Kristen <Kristen.Puryear@maine.gov>
Subject: RE: NRPA review request, Spinney boat ramp/dock, Alna

Hi Jami,

MNAP comments attached, thanks,

Lisa St. Hilaire

Information Manager | Maine Natural Areas Program
Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
177 State House Station | Augusta, ME 04333 (**NEW** mailing address)
90 Blossom Lane | Augusta, ME 04333 (**NEW** physical address)
PHONE 207-287-8044 (Same phone!)
FAX 287-7548 (NEW FAX)

From: MacNeil, Jami
Sent: Thursday, October 03, 2019 11:46 AM
To: Puryear, Kristen <Kristen.Puryear@maine.gov>
Subject: NRPA review request, Spinney boat ramp/dock, Alna

Hi Kristen,

Attached is a NRPA review request for Jeff Spinney's application for a boat ramp and dock system on the Sheepscot River in Alna. I have also attached the application and photos from my site visit on 9/6/19. As I mentioned, there are some interested persons with concerns about adverse impact to salt marsh in this area due to the ramp, dock, and potentially increased boat traffic. Please provide a memo with MNAP's opinion.

Thank you,

-Jami MacNeil

Environmental Specialist III
Bureau of Land Resources
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
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Jeff Spinney – Boat ramp and dock system, Alna DEP #L-28397-4E-A-N, Inspection Notes & Photos

Project Location: 126 Golden Ridge Road, Alna

Date/Time: 1/7/2021, 11am – 12pm

Low tide: 11:30am

Conditions: Snow cover 2-3” deep; sunny; 33°F.

Department staff: Jami MacNeil; Cameron Dufour

Others on site: Jeff Spinney (licensee); Tom McKenzie (Alna CEO)

Notes:

Attendees met at the licensee’s house and walked down the tote road from house to project site. Boat ramp construction was complete. DEP staff measured the ramp and found it is 12 feet wide by approximately 30 feet long (beginning approximately at the highest annual tide line (HAT) and extending towards mean low water). The immediate upland at the top of the ramp had been regraded to tie into the ramp, as proposed on the approved plans. Ramp surface (rock aggregate) appeared stable. Licensee stated that geotextile fabric was placed under the stone ramp surface (as shown in construction photos sent by licensee). Adjacent upland was covered in snow; however, pushing snow aside, hay mulch was evident underneath (also evident in construction photos). DEP staff advised that the licensee should continue to monitor the upland area during any melting events and apply additional mulch as needed.

The approved seasonal floats were being stored in the upland. The approved seasonal aluminum ramp (gangway) was also in the upland, though it is slightly overhanging the coastal wetland. Staff advised the licensee to move it further onto the upland. The gangway was resting on a granite block, located in the upland several feet from the HAT line. DEP advised the licensee to move the block to a different upland location during the off-season to prevent the block from being considered a permanent structure as defined in the NRPA, and licensee agreed.

Signs advising of boating speed laws and best practices to prevent spread of invasive species were posted in a visible location at the launch area as required in the NRPA permit.

Summary: Project is complete, site appeared stable to the extent observable under snow conditions. No adverse environmental impacts were observed.



Photo 1: Ramp, from upland

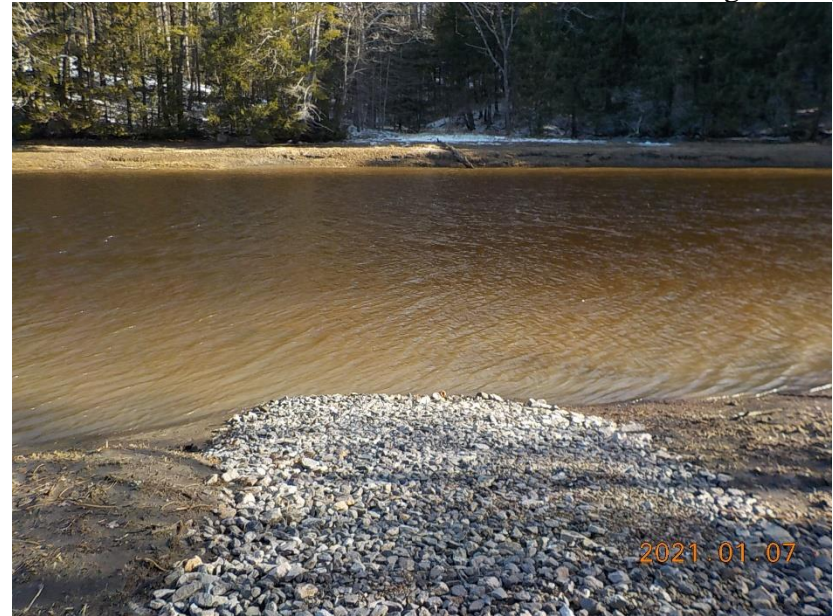


Photo 2: Ramp, lower section



Photo 3: Ramp surface



Photo 4: Ramp surface (key for scale)



Photo 5: Looking north



Photo 6: Looking north



Photo 7: Looking south



Photo 8: Looking south



Photo 9: Signs



Photo 10: Aluminum ramp (gangway)



Photo 11: Granite block for gangway



Photo 12: Floats stored in upland

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