

MEMORANDUM

Maine Natural Areas Program

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

Date: April 13, 2020

To: Naomi Kirk-Lawler

From: Kristen Puryear, Ecologist

Re: MNAP Comments, Zoning Petition to Terminate the Moosehead Region Concept Plan (MRCP).

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 March 19, 2020 for our agency's comments on the rezoning petition.

According to our current information, there are two locations where the areas proposed for rezoning intersect with mapped MNAP features. In both cases the features are rare plant populations. One (Slender Rush, *Juncus subtilis*) is on the shoreline of Long Lake and under the rezoning, this area will be captured in a Great Pond zoned subdistrict. The other (Lesser Wintergreen, *Pyrola minor*) is on a stream course near Big Moose Mountain and will be captured by a Shoreland - 75' zoned subdistrict. The Slender Rush occurrence on the shore of Long Lake should be unharmed by the zoning change, but the Lesser Wintergreen occurrence may be vulnerable if land outside of the Shoreland - 75' zoned subdistrict is cleared.

Feature	State Status	State Rank	Global Rank	Occurrence Rank	Notes
Slender Rush <i>Juncus subtilis</i>	E	S1	G5?	A Excellent	Long Pond
Lesser Wintergreen <i>Pyrola minor</i>	SC	S2	G5	C Fair	Big Moose Mountain

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 Natural Areas Program or about rare or unique botanical features at this site.

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Juncus subtilis E. Mey.

Slender Rush

- [State Rank](#): S1
- [Global Rank](#): G4
- [State Status](#): Endangered

Habitat: Margins of ponds and shores [Non-tidal rivershore (non-forested, seasonally wet); Open wetland, not coastal nor rivershore (non-forested, wetland)]

Range: Newfoundland to Maine and western Quebec; Greenland.

Aids to Identification: Rushes are grass-like plants with 6 inconspicuous sepals and petals (called tepals) and capsular fruits. *Juncus subtilis* is easily recognized with or without flowers. It possesses septate-nodulose leaves borne in small clusters from the nodes of a prostrate, creeping, or floating stem. The flowers usually number only one or two per plant.

Ecological characteristics: The flowers are sometimes modified into a tiny tuft of leaves called a bulbil. This bulbil is essentially a small plantlet and serves as a relatively inexpensive means of reproduction.



Phenology: Unknown

Family: Juncaceae

Synonyms: None noted.

Known Distribution in Maine: This rare plant has been documented from a total of 5 town(s) in the following county(ies): Aroostook, Piscataquis, Somerset.

Reason(s) for rarity: At southern limit of range.

Conservation considerations: Unknown.

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Pyrola minor L.

Lesser Wintergreen

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

Habitat: Moist woods. [Conifer forest (forest, upland)]

Range: Circumboreal. South to the higher mountains of New England and northern Michigan.



Aids to Identification: This small wintergreen grows to a height of only 5-15 cm. Like other members of the genus *Pyrola*, this herb has no true stem, but rather a flower stalk upon which grows a raceme of white flowers. Lesser wintergreen can be distinguished from closely related species by two characteristics: the flowers grow on all sides of the stalk, rather than just being one-sided; and

the style of each flower is straight and does not protrude beyond the end of the petals. The nearly basal leaves of *P. minor* are round-oblong and 2-4 cm long.

Ecological characteristics: In Maine, this plant is found in cool, moist woods, usually near streams or riverbanks.

Phenology: Flowers June - August.

Family: Ericaceae

Synonyms: *Braxilia minor* (L.) House; *Erxlebenia minor* (L.) Rydb.; *Pyrola minor* var. *parviflora* Boivin.

Known Distribution in Maine: This rare plant has been documented from a total of 17 town(s) in the following county(ies): Aroostook, Franklin, Piscataquis, Somerset

Reason(s) for rarity: At southern limit of range.

Conservation considerations: Unknown. Complete canopy removal would more likely harm the populations than would partial canopy removal.



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